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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME II — SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1925 — NUMBER 22

Broadcasting Fiction

LITERATURE was born in the declamations of the poets, and literature, if Mr. Cosmo Hamilton is right about it, will return to oral narratives. Mr. Hamilton will have it that our generation, harassed by the multitudinous demands of a complex civilization, will find its leisure for reading, at least for light reading, constantly decreasing, and that it will perforce take its novels in the compressed form of a fifteen minute radio recital instead of a three hundred and fifty page book. In pursuance of his belief Mr. Hamilton not many nights ago presented to an invisible audience a complete novel within the space of a quarter of an hour.

It is an appalling, if interesting, prospect which his experiment opens up. For the force of circumstances which made for the birth of a heroic literature in primitive times was in exact opposition to the pressure which would constrain the fiction of the present to radio presentation. The bard of early days lacked no leisure on the part of his audience to attend his tale; the more he could embroider it, the more he could lend it detail and color, the longer it could furnish entertainment to listeners whose amusements were rigidly limited by the comparative isolation and enforced simplicity of their times. Homer, enumerating the ships of the Greeks, was not cataloguing names while a restive audience chafed to hasten away, but was furnishing food for an empty hour. Detail, characterization, description of persons and scenes, reminiscence, personal and historical incident, all that could carry afield imaginations that had no newspapers, no books, no constant stream of foreigners to divert them were treasure trove for the bard and his audience. The grand, the romantic, and the tragic naturally inflamed men's minds more than the trifling; the narratives that contained them passed on from mouth to mouth, becoming transmuted as they went until they had assumed heroic character.

But can anyone conceive of such a result evolving from radio narration? Its very existence, if it ever comes into existence as an established fact, will be due to the impatience of a public rushing helter-skelter from one business engagement to another, and fluttering from theatre to movie and movie to cabaret, to spend time on a novel that demands several hours or evenings for its reading. The more completely the novel is stripped of all but its story, and the more exciting that story can be made, the more certain it is to meet with the favor of an audience that is being bombarded with the latest joke, the latest jazz, the latest news from the four corners of the Union.

What the radio will do to fiction as an art leaves no room for doubt. What it will do to the taste of the public is scarcely less uncertain. For by forcing the novelist to shear away description and extraneous happenings, leaving outstanding incident and dialogue in high relief, it will accustom the public palate to fiction stripped of every vestige of philosophical content and as barren of subtleties and psychological interpretations as the fiction of the screen. By furnishing entertainment at a maximum of speed and with a minimum of effort on the part of the recipient it will reduce the resilience of the listener to the point where the crudest values alone will find welcome. It cannot but add to the already deplorable tendency to absorb only so much of fact and generalization as can be taken in without thought and effort. Surely no means could be devised more certain to let the public get what its indolence rather than its merits deserves. No worse turn could be done to literature than to have the novel become the perquisite of the radio.

Jolly Laughter

By WALTER DE LA MARE

WITH strawberry jam and cream for tea,
Plum-cake a-following after;
It always seems, it seems to me
There's room enough for laughter,
Jolly laughter.
Not that I'd ever think to make
A plea to eat for eating's sake,
But when a Scare-Bones takes his place
With a long, lean, sour, hungry face
And cannot even breathe a grace,
There couldn't be a denser, dafter;
And for his pains I take to laughter,
Jolly laughter.
I've sat beside a dainty Miss
And passed her that and them and this,
And when she *never* answers "Iss,"
Why then, bless me, I've gently chaffed her
Until she *can't* resist for laughter,
Jolly laughter.
And so I say, crowd round the table!
And eat as much as you are able!
Man's mouth is not so very wide,
There's plenty of old Earth outside—
And all the moons and stars abaft her
A-shaking of their sides with laughter,
Jolly laughter.

This Week

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Published by Time, Incorporated
Publishers of TIME,
The Weekly News-Magazine

Translations

By ERNEST BOYD

THE recent vogue of Pirandello in London has led to the discovery that the two volumes of his plays owe their existence to American enterprise, and has raised in an acute form the old question of American versus English translations. British readers profess the utmost distaste for Pirandello in his present English garb, because the only edition available is one imported from this country. The versions of Dr. Livingston and Mr. Edward Storer have been subjected to that minute scrutiny which, in a long experience of such matters, I have never seen applied to translations obviously made in England, but to which most translators from this side of the Atlantic must submit. Over here reviewers are more charitable, or less suspicious, but I have pointed out on several occasions and in detail the most serious defects, omissions, and errors in translations hailed in England as impeccable, and accepted as such in America without question. I will cite as examples Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's versions of Marcel Proust, the translations of Paul Morand by "H.B.V.," and most of the volumes of Anatole France.

There is a certain loose way of referring to translations as being "good" or "bad" which is very common, but which does not mean any close comparison of the text and the English by a qualified student of both languages. It means, so far as I can make out, that the translation seems to run smoothly and that the reader is not shocked by clumsy locutions or unfamiliar turns of phrase. Hence, no doubt, the infrequency of challenges by American readers to English translators, as most Americans do not resent Briticisms, or idiomatic usages which are not familiar in this country. The English reader, on the contrary, is up in arms at once against Americanisms and, presumably, once his suspicions are aroused, he sits down and examines the English carefully with the text beside him. When he finds textual errors, in addition to the American phrasing which displeases him, his case against the American translator is complete. It is my contention that, when the process is reversed, the same charges can be made against the average British translation as against the average American. And when I refer to good or bad translations I mean those that have been examined by a linguist qualified in both languages concerned.

Americans, although accused of being unduly susceptible to criticism of themselves, show a curious tolerance in these conflicts of idiom. They do not take it amiss that they are supposed to familiarize themselves with British slang and local English allusions, although there is no reciprocity so far as the majority of their own writers are concerned. Mr. A. B. Walkley, for example, writes an appreciative essay on George Jean Nathan, but complains of his wealth of reference to American matters incomprehensible to a Londoner, as if English books were free from a similar and natural allusiveness concerning things English. The American translator knows a little more than the American reader of the English intolerance of Americanisms, but only those extensively engaged in the business of translating can know the heights to which this sense of self-satisfaction can rise. A prominent London publisher not long ago denounced contemptuously a translation made from a French classic which he was preparing to issue in England. An American publisher had forestalled him, so at once the translator was dismissed as a mere American and, therefore, not to be compared with his English rival in the same field.

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It so happens that the translator in question was English, and, having examined the book page by page, I can vouch that it was done into excellent English, far superior to the translations, which I had similarily examined, by the translator whom the English publisher declared so incomparably superior. This point as to the nationality of the translator is interesting because Pirandello is not the only Continental author of importance whose existence in English is due to American enterprise. There are many others: André Gide, Pío Baroja, Pérez de Ayala, Henri Céard, Jacinto Benavente, Ladislas Reymont, Carl Spitteler, Hauptmann, Blasco Ibáñez, Azorín, Eça de Queiroz, Heinrich Mann, Thomas Mann, C. F. Ramuz, Jakob Wassermann. The list might be greatly extended, especially if one adds to it the writers, such as Gobineau, Hamsun, Maupassant, Werner von Heidenstam, and Romain Rolland, who would have been abandoned after a volume or two had been tried, but for the support of American publishers and readers. However, many of these authors have actually been translated in England by Englishmen, although published first over here by the Americans who conceived the plan and paid for the work.

The English assumption that a translated work, which has been imported from America, must have been done into English by an American and be, therefore, unsatisfactory, is a rash assumption. It is rash, in the first place, because the translator may be a British subject resident in England or, if resident in America, guiltless of Americanisms. It is rash, in the second place, because publishers in this country have definitely taken the lead in making Continental European literature known to English-speaking readers, they are constantly forestalling English publishers in this field, and they can command translators whose linguistic qualifications are neither better nor worse than those of the average translator in England. It is unfair, because English translators are accepted at their own—or their publishers'—valuation in America, by American, or supposedly American, translators are received with a prejudice and criticized with a severity which their English colleagues escape.

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The comments on the Pirandello plays supply a typical example of this hypercritical attitude. In one London weekly a reviewer cites "right away" indignantly, and asks: "why not 'at once'?" The London correspondent of the New York *Bookman* declares that "candies" does not strike an English reader as Italian, but "sweets" does! Another critic wonders if the expression "a man made over" means anything to an American, doubts it, but concludes triumphantly that it is certainly meaningless to English ears. Nobody condescends to explain how it is closer to the original Italian, French, Polish, Russian, or whatever the text may be, to say: "Come off it, old bean!" rather than: "Quit your kiddin', buddy!"; "top hole" instead of "O. K."; or "I shall let my flat in Gower Street this autumn," rather than "I shall rent my apartment on 12th Street this fall." An English locution is *ipso facto* not only more familiar to an English reader, but, it seems, also nearer to the text. Yet, the fact actually is that more people from Continental Europe speak American than speak English!

An added piece of unconscious humor in the criticism of Pirandello is that Dr. Livingston, the American, is taken to task, although his Italian scholarship is well authenticated and beyond dispute. Mr. Edward Storer, on the contrary, is an Englishman, and his translations are so defective in places as to show a complete misunderstanding of the text, but no complaints have been raised on that score. He is not cited as a proof that Englishmen should not be entrusted with the delicate work of putting Pirandello into English. In fact, as the *Bookman* correspondent already quoted insists, the remedy suggested is that American translations should be confined to America, and only Englishmen should be allowed to publish translations in England. One might have thought that the proper claim would be that a competent person, and only a competent person, irrespective of nationality, should translate. But British nationality is more important than American scholarship, apparently.

To sum up: there is an utter lack of reciprocity in the dealings of English publishers and critics with American translations. A comparison of the authors introduced into English by the enterprise of Americans will show that, while they have been interested in writers of a certain quality and standing, the English have largely confined their very limited activity in this field to books that had some momentary vogue or sensational interest. While London jumps at the latest prize novel, or piece of French pseudo-eroticism, and then is afraid to give the *risque* passages, New York is negotiating with a Spengler, a Gide, or a Thomas Mann. While the most commonplace version of a foreign book, when made in England, is pronounced a masterpiece, American translators are strictly examined, and accused of adding the offense of using their own idiom to the injury of linguistic incompetence. If gross errors in an English translation are pointed out, the retort is that no translation is perfect, but in an American translation the same slips are signs of indefensible negligence and ignorance.

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The remedy obviously lies with American publishers and critics, in their turn. So long as the former submit to this decidedly "certain condescension in foreigners," they will look in vain for coöperation in cases where they deserve and are entitled to it. So long as the latter repeat docilely what is echoed from London concerning the superlative merits of translators who are rarely more than just competent, and frequently downright bad, they may be certain that only American translations in England will be criticized as all translations ought to be. The merits of a translation from a living language can be readily tested by qualified critics. There is no analogy between the problems involved and those which lead to differences of opinion as to the precise rendering of obscure passages from Latin or Greek. Translators usually betray themselves, not in their inability to render elaborate, involved, or recondite passages, but in their misunderstanding of idioms and allusions which ought to be known to any person who fully possesses the language in which they occur. Their meaning can be ascertained, for the original text has not been buried in the dust of dead centuries. Ignorance of them argues an unfamiliarity with the language, which is an obstacle to scholarly and authoritative translation. To guess wildly at their meaning is to reveal an unwillingness to take pains and to learn. In this respect English translations can establish no right to take unchallenged precedence over American.

Moreover, the question at issue becomes, in the last analysis, not simply a discussion of the merits of American and English translations, but an inquiry as to what is standard English. It has long since become a platitude that many so-called "Americanisms" are the purest English and have an authentic literary lineage. It has also been admitted by most qualified scholars that London English has no claim whatever to be regarded as standard. The phonetic peculiarities of that English are not its only divergencies from the speech of other parts of England. In fact, that peculiar speech might be described as falling further from the standard than that of any other section of the British Isles, in the sense that the North Country man, the Scotsman, and the Irishman present more points in common with each other than with the Southern English of London and its environs. Scottish and Irish usages have actually been welcomed as enriching the literary fund of English. Why not Americanisms?

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The time has passed when the English language could be claimed as the exclusive idiom of Britain, much less of any restricted area of England. To-day it is the tongue of millions who have no other language, but have also no other tie with the country from which English came. There is no authority which can enforce the recognition of a standard English that does not exist, save in the imagination of a few people in London. When these people write or speak they betray their place of origin as definitely as a native of New York or Edinburgh. Their assumption that, while the latter are strange and provincial, they are standard and authoritative, is merely an illustration of self-complacent provincialism. It is an assumption which the great English-speaking world does not and cannot admit.

The Psychic Benchley

PLUCK AND LUCK. By Robert Benchley. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1925. $2.

Reviewed by William Rose Benét

EXPERIENCE has already shown that great improvements can be made by applying Mendelian principles to the breeding of such anciently established crop plants as wheat, oats, and tobacco. Therefore, fulfilling a condition of Confederation in the East, the Dominion government originally undertook the completion of the Intercolonial railway between the province of Quebec and the ice-free Atlantic ports of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and in 184 B. C. he was elected censor, and discharged so rigorously the duties of his office that the epithet *Censorius*, formerly applied to all persons in the same station, was made his permanent surname. This is a genus of bulbous plants of the iris family. They are mostly natives of the Cape of Good Hope or a native silicate of zirconium, we forget which.

But don't interrupt us, because we are trying to review Mr. Benchley's latest compendium of useful knowledge, in which you learn all about suburban timetables, how to skate, what to do with the kiddies on a railroad journey, the truth about Shakespeare, facts about the Reebis Gulf, the famous Weemix discovery, the scandal about the electrons, how to speak French unless interrupted, all about the gay life backstage, and so on and forth, until we have become a little bewildered.

We have also laughed heartily.

"After all," as Mr. Benchley says, in "John Dwanley: A Life," "After all, where would God be?" Our answer is, with full reverence for the deity, that perhaps, if God ever got any off hours, He would just as lief be reading "Pluck and Luck." We should—and according to Mr. H. G. Wells, we are God, or, at least, he is.

This is a sadly human story, this book of Mr. Benchley's. You couldn't exactly call it a novel, because it is a collection of short pieces. Exception may also be taken to just about everything Mr. Benchley says in it, because he is a perfectly *awful* liar. Mr. Gluyas Williams's pictures of him with a mustache look exactly like him. But perhaps we had better tell you a little more about Mr. Benchley.

Mr. Benchley is an American educator, and was born in New Smyrna on July 9th, 1832 at the age of seventeen. He was graduated at the age of thirty-two from Albert University and engaged in the work of organizing several industrial concerns from 1909 to 1913. His pen name up to that time was Richmond Pearson Hobson. In 1720 he first began business for himself, engraving coats of arms and designing plates for booksellers. Or else he was a Dutch landscape painter, born in Amsterdam in 1638. Anyway, this eminent cabinet officer and jurist just missed being made attorney-general by President Wilson and lecturing at Western Reserve University 1919—. In 1890, a Democratic legislature grossly gerrymandered his district, making it easy to defeat him for re-election.

It has been falsely reported that Mr. Benchley was ever vice-president and treasurer of Sears, Roebuck and Company, mail order house of Chicago. We want to nail that statement right here. In appearance Mr. Benchley is a short, stout, genial old fellow, whose chief amusements are card indexes and translating Sallust. He stands nearly three hands high and weighs about 300 pounds. He lives in bands, sometimes 50 in number, and is very alert and wary and difficult of approach. In other words, a shrub of the loosestrife family, native of tropical Asia. In color it is bright yellow dimly marked with salmon-colored streaks. Its food consists chiefly of fruits.

According to the atomic theory advanced by Dalton in 1803 Mr. Benchley's book wouldn't be much. On the other hand, though the earth travels in its orbit at about 18½ miles per second, that doesn't seem to worry Mr. Benchley. He quite casts aside the system of Guido of Arezzo (known as *solfeggio*) and proceeds more like an old-time *minnesinger* (*minne*, signifying "love"), although the influence of the principle of tonality upon musical development has no place in his treatise. This is indeed a strange omission.

That is about all we can think up to say. Most of it is not true.

Mr. Benchley has written another funny book.

It *is* funny.

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"If I Were Pope"

HADRIAN THE SEVENTH. By [illegible] Baron Corvo. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1925. $3.

Reviewed by Louis Kronenberger

TO BECOME better informed about the curious author of "Hadrian the Seventh" I turned to the introduction which Shane Leslie has written for Corvo's "In His Own Image." I found recorded there the life of a bitter, ironic, perspicacious, fervent Catholic who studied for the priesthood but was denied it—a man of few friends and many occupations, and a creator of curious books well-known by name but little read. On finishing "Hadrian" itself, I realized that Leslie's introduction is valuable in but one respect: it shows that the book is an autobiography. For of Corvo it tells nothing that he does not tell, in "Hadrian," of himself. Obscure in the flesh, so that the details of his life are lacking, Corvo has rendered them superfluous by setting down one of the most vivid and revealing autobiographies of modern times.

Two things—its obvious aims and its unquestionable achievements—stand out in "Hadrian the Seventh": its picture of Corvo in the person of George Arthur Rose, and its presentation of Corvo's ideal Pope. Thus it is both autobiographic and imaginative; and since George Rose becomes Hadrian VII, it is fiction based on fact, an imaginary Pope developed out of a living man. Circumstantially it is Corvo in dual character, as he is and as he would be; but philosophically it is one man. George Rose is himself, Hadrian he creates in his own image. As Shane Leslie says, Corvo might have called the book "If I Were Pope." For in its pages he is the Pope regnant, and this vicarious glory is a trifle ironic, due not to the fact that he never became a Pope, but that he never became even a priest. His Hadrian is not the product of day-dreaming, or the fruit of an idea objectively conceived; it is the apotheosis of a lifelong passion, bitterly subjective; it is a grand-scale flight from reality in which the fugitive soars far above the priestly goal he was denied.

* * *

This passion is the key to the book and brings order out of verbose and bewildering chaos. Under one philosophy it unites the *mélange* of facts, theories, imaginary events, and papal grandioseness which make up the career of George Rose as Pope. It enables the imaginary to bear a curious resemblance to the real. It manages to subjugate Corvo's sprawling and unmastered culture, his incorrigibly mannered style, and his journalistic divagations to a place where they are not acutely objectionable. It gives form to the book—in spite of its impurities. "Hadrian" gathers power; it cuts through its self-made obstacles; it marches. And Corvo's passion makes vivid and human the figure of Hadrian VII.

In Hadrian, Corvo offers the Pope of his ideal. First he shows us George Rose kept, like himself, out of the priesthood and living from hand to mouth. Then fictional machinery is set in motion—Rose gets justice (as Corvo did not) and is ordained a priest. Then, by almost a miracle, the priest becomes Pope. For one year, until he is assassinated, he rules as Corvo would have ruled. He straightens out twisted lives, he sells the Vatican wealth to aid the poor, he gives up claim to worldly power to wield spiritual power more perfectly—and he leaves the Vatican walls whenever he chooses (as no Pope has done, of course, since 1870). Indeed, he brings about complete reconciliation between Church and State. Years before history makes them facts, he canonizes Joan of Arc, effects a League of Nations, wants to depose Ferdinand of Bulgaria, and blesses the city of Rome. He deals with real people, such as Kaiser Wilhelm and Victor Emanuel, as Corvo would have dealt. Above all else he contemplates himself, and we see the soul of Frederick Baron Corvo.

The autobiographic impact behind this conception of Hadrian tends for a moment to emphasize Corvo the man and to obscure Corvo the writer. The very reality of this self-portrait is a high point in his literary favor, for it proves that, whatever his methods or mannerisms, he has fundamentally succeeded. For this reason I have no hesitation in saying that his oddities and infelicities of style and manner are superficial. They are the logical excrescences of the man that Corvo (as Hadrian) showed himself to be. In the main they consist of [illegible] be degraded by archaisms and neologisms; of a hard-boiled erudition laid on with a trowel; and of a [illegible]-edge of journalistic matter out of keeping with the book's dignity. The grandiosity of Corvo's [illegible] cannot be attacked, for it has a satiric [illegible]. The book abounds in burlesque of certain [illegible] of papal history and in scenes of high comedy. Toward the secular side of the Vatican, and various [illegible]-pseudonymous personalities connected with it, Corvo shows a malicious regard. That he could do this, and yet describe himself in a foreword as an obedient son of the Church, is explained by one of his own remarks: "As for the Faith, I found it comfortable. As for the Faithful, I found them intolerable."

The Goods of Life

ADVENTURES IN UNDERSTANDING. By David Grayson. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1925. $2.50.

Reviewed by Ernest Sutherland Bates

SEVENTEEN years ago when David Grayson's "Adventures in Contentment" appeared, few people not in the secret could have guessed that the quiet philosopher of the inner life was also Ray Stannard Baker, redoubtable journalistic warrior against the manifold evil institutions of that early day. Yet by the law of psychic reaction it was perhaps natural that such eloquent praise of the sane and simple life should come from a journalist surfeited with the noise and confusion of journalism. The work at once gained for its author the devotion of a large public which has remained faithful to each of its rarely appearing successors. David Grayson's writings have filled for contemporary America

"Troubles Was Hard"
Illustration from "Mellows," by R. E. Kennedy
(A. & C. Boni)

the rôle taken in former times by the pastoral; they have kept before us ideals of grace, simplicity, and wholesome living which we do not intend to follow but which we still admire; with this difference, however, that, unlike the pastoral writers, David Grayson speaks with a sincerity and profound humanity that are above suspicion.

There is an old and foolish literary quarrel between the city and the country, dating at least from the times of Goldsmith and Cowper, as foolish as would be a quarrel over the respective merits of the night and the morning. The folly of it is well shown in the present volume in which our greatest exponent of the charm of the countryside writes with equal charm of his life in a great city during the troubled period of the war, with but one short excursion back to his—and our—beloved Hempfield. The charm, in other words, lies, as in every work of literature, not in the subject but in the author, not in country or city, *per se*, but in David Grayson.

These "Adventures in Understanding" are, as one might expect, adventures in which the heart is guide to the understanding—and David Grayson's heart leads to interesting acquaintances and scenes, treated with the now familiar mastery: Jensen's forlorn pumpkin garden, the twenty-seven year bootblack, the conquering iceman, the Mill and the Man in the Glass Cage, Negro Joe, and the Shabby Man, and the old German, all presented unforgettably. Like the earlier works, this deals with the joy of little things. No other living writer can so make one's mouth water by the mention of food or one's nerves tingle by the description of a wintry day. David Grayson chants the values of sheer existence, physical or emotional, that vast sub-cultural existence in which all of us, however much concerned with culture we may be, necessarily pass most of our life, and in which the most of men, necessarily, pass all their life. An occasional lapse of erudition, such as his assumption that Homer was contemporary with the warriors of whom he wrote, is almost an aid in the picture of sub-cultural felicity. Yet although the book is written with the heart, it is no more lacking than its predecessors in notable epigram. "If a city produces good and noble and beautiful human beings, then it is a good city; if a mill produces good and fine men, then it is a good mill." "The shells of human beings cause most of the trouble in this world. They not only keep other people out but they keep the man himself in." Throughout runs the emphasis, especially needful in our current habit of tracing all ills to "society," upon the life of the inner man. Tranquillity and freedom, kindliness, the unity of one's own spirit,—these are the true goods of life. This sane sense of real values is the quality most lacking in present day life and literature, and it is David Grayson's highest quality.

One disadvantage of being sane in a mad world is that one becomes terribly self-conscious about it. Particularly if he is not only sane but morally in earnest. And David Grayson is both. His gospel is good, but sometimes he almost spoils the effect by needless reiteration. After a clinching example, he will give the precept, "the moral of this is"—and one is tempted in sheer irritation to deny this self-evident moral. Especially exasperating is his never-ending inculcation of cheerfulness. Truly, it is well to be cheerful, but it is not so well to be always talking about how cheerful one is. Similarly with his indulgence in sentiment, which narrowly avoids and yet does avoid sentimentality, which is never false but is too often cloying. This, no doubt, has added to his immediate popularity but will prove a drawback to his lasting quality in the harder age that is already in sight. Meanwhile, however, we do well to be thankful for David Grayson. One may say, what one can say of few authors, that the world would be a better place if there were millions of him.

A Too Prolific Poet

SELECTED POEMS. By Edgar Lee Masters. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1925. $2.50.

Reviewed by Edward Davison

AT THE present rate of progress Mr. Edgar Lee Masters threatens to become one of the most prolific poets in history. In a mere ten years he has written more than two-thousand pages of verse of which some four hundred are reprinted in this volume of selections. Shakespeare, in twice ten years, wrote very little more. Chaucer, who lived and wrote until he was sixty, produced less from first to last. In quantity Mr. Masters has already left Spenser, Milton, Wordsworth, and Tennyson far behind him. To match his two thousand pages we must look back to Gower and Lydgate and more than one poet whose name now rests in the Limbo of literature. In poetry, as in all things, quantity is generally achieved at the expense of quality. Without denying many of those qualities that have made Mr. Masters famous it may be said that his work is not an exception to the rule. His roses, such as they are, have been scattered at intervals on the face of a desert of verse. Haste has taken the edge away from his rhythms and language: his poetry is traced on sand instead of being engraved on brass. Even his most successful poems are scarred with the wounds of careless haste: they cry for revision, that final moulding caress of the artist hand which can be observed in almost any original manuscript of the good poems of his predecessors, from Herrick, through Blake to Tennyson. Mr. Masters has eloquence, vitality, variety, and forcefulness but he is not the master of his medium. Words and rhythm guide him as often as he guides them. In rhyme this circumstance is particularly noticeable.

> **And the sun hung like a red balloon,**
> Or a bomb afire o'er a barracoon.

His similes and images, as here, too often groan from the rhyme and the metre instead of springing hot-footed from the mind's vision like angels of necessity. Why a barracoon, unless because

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the word rhymes with balloon? One feels that this almost gratuitous bomb would have hung over anything that happened to rhyme with the likeness of the sun. Scarcely is there a page in the volume which is not marred by some infelicity of this kind. And these are not the kind of faults that belong even to the unsuccessful work of fine poets. Verbal beauty and music have never been Mr. Masters's strong points. He is characteristically crude and violent. His sketches of odd characters in an ugly world still appear as his best work. Strangely enough it is in such poems that beauty most tends to break through. In describing ugliness Mr. Masters often achieves that balance of pleasure which gives spiritual significance even to the mean things of his world. In a few poems, of which "Chicago" is a good instance, he makes verse of really personable quality, though still hasty and ill-considered, crude and unmusical, yet, in spite of all, vivid and strong and intermittently impassioned. But he never sustains a really high level of poetic utterance for more than two or three lines at a time and there is not much in these four hundred pages that could not have been better said in prose. Mr. Masters's fine energy has never been economically directed so that the very real strain of poetry in his composition runs thin and often trickles away altogether. A really satisfactory selection from his works would have to be confined to little more than a hundred of Mr. Masters's two thousand pages.

A Strong Book

EARTH MOODS. By HERVEY ALLEN. New York: Harper & Bros. 1925.

Reviewed by LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

TO SAY that a book is important is to say many things. It may mean that it is modern, vigorous, fearless. To call Hervey Allen's "Earth Moods", his latest volume of poems, important, is to mean all this. It is also artistic. His major subject is a vast one, and he has not only handled it with certainty and skill, but with a sharp sense for the definite and fitting word. Neither in the long first poems nor in the briefer ones which follow, is there any slackness of workmanship. The book will not appeal to those who write or read the petty and pretty inanities choking the public press of late, or to those whose cultivation of literature extends only to fifteen minutes each day, as advised in connection with Dr. Eliot's Book Shelf; but it should be a boon to thinkers.

* * *

Sixty-seven pages of "Earth Moods" are given up to telling the story of the mystery of life, to the rhythmical expression of the theory of evolution, to the struggle between matter and man; they are full of the winds that blow "between the worlds" and of high and lonely adventurings. This poem is divided into five parts, and each deals in an epic fashion with its particular time and place. The first section has two divisions, entitled respectively "Saga of the North" and "Saga of Leif the Lucky". The poem opens with the sun, moon, and stars shining down upon a vacant seething world. Ages after, come the Carthaginians cracking their whips "upon the backs of frozen elephants," and the Romans throwing out "white veins of roads to bleed the world." In the latter we have the tale of Lief Erikson sailing into a "land as lonesome as a star."

> Leif Erikson came rowing up the Charles,
> In the sea-battered dragon ships,
> Stroked by the strong, blond carls,
> The rattle of whose oars
> Had wakened sea-lions on the glacial shores
> Of Greenland, where the White Christ newly ruled.

The whole of these two divisions of the poem is packed with pictures, small, vivid things bitten into the sea and sky. This making of pictures is an especial gift of Mr. Allen. Phrase after phrase starts up to arrest you. You have a world in half-a-dozen words.

"Funeral at High Tide" continues the theme of the major part of the volume. We have here the inexorable sea and inexorable death. There is an exceptionally alive description of a negro funeral procession crawling along a road toward a white-washed country church, and the lately dug grave yawning beyond it.

"Children of the Earth" is distinctly different. It is the study of two temperaments, one of the north, one of the south. The stony fields, the gnarled orchard trees, the house set down in the midst, and the two tall tragic pines standing beside John Kenyon's gate belong to the man's heritage; the sandy roads, the sea-smells, the

> . . . evening pools,
> Enameled by the sunset, turgid scents,
> And long, white, wraithy herons gliding home,

to the woman's. The characterization is as real as life. The husband, the wife, is each an individual, a creation. A few lines, and you have them both.

* * *

"The Nest of Mist" treats of the mystery of nature in contrast to its lack in the towns, and "The Fire Thief", with the legend of Prometheus, "of one who lost himself among the stars." This ends the most significant portion of the book, but there are other poems, sixteen in all, which help, perhaps in a homelier fashion, to uphold its high reputation.

"Shadow to Shadow" is a ghost poem, of six grisly stanzas, well-done, with not a superfluous word. "Spider, Spider" takes for its subject the on-coming of madness. The woman, the tower, the wind over the moor, the squatting spider make a horror that has something about it of the black vast void of primeval night.

"Earth Moods" is a strong book. It makes its author a significant figure in American poetry. And for those of us who feel, as well as think, there is here in these poems a deep sense of beauty, and a sound spirituality.

The Far Road

MY LIFE AS AN EXPLORER. By SVEN HEDIN. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1925.

Reviewed by GENE LAMB

SEVENTEEN years after the conclusion of his final voyage into Tibet, Sven Hedin, "the indefatigable traveller," has consolidated between the covers of one volume an account of his experiences in Asiatic exploration. The early exploits of Nordenskiold, Livingston and Stanley, Franklin and Payer ignited within him during his youth the spark which later kindled the fires of such ambitious conquests as he undertook in his succeeding ventures. Beginning with his initial journey from Stockholm to the shores of the Caspian Sea in 1885, the author has outlined that and his subsequent expeditions in Turkestan, across northern Tibet with Peking as his eventual goal, through the sand wastes of the treacherous Taklamakan Desert, crowning his long list of achievements with his explorations of the uncharted fastnesses of the Transhimalayas, a region which had hitherto remained a stumbling block to the map makers of this mighty universe.

To those acquainted with the author's previous chronicles of his travels there will come a desire to institute a comparison of these works with the volume under review. The grain has been separated from the chaff, but where, oh where, is the chaff? Certainly, the final product seems to have suffered nothing from the process of abbreviation which it has undergone.

To those familiar with the voluminous works of Sven Hedin, "My Life as an Explorer" offers a weird, entrancing tale of true adventure—the seeking of the great unknown. There are two lines of approach and that offering the least resistance will undoubtedly impel the majority of readers to race through the pages, thrilling with the hair-breadth escape of the author from the grim, dry clutches of the Taklamakan on the banks of the Kotandaria, the determination of his intrepid caravan as it battled its way through endless storms and winter colds. For indeed, no hardship, no sacrifice, no near-calamity was ever too small to find its way into the traveller's notebook; no effort was ever spared to make Tibet forbidding, and to keep it so but for Sven Hedin. Here and there one will find a patch of blue sky, a ray of sunshine, and the caress of a warm breeze and will sink down beside these scarce oases with a feeling of gratitude.

But there will be those who seek a true appreciation of the author's great determination and sincerity of purpose. For them it is to be regretted that the edition was not fitted with a more comprehensive supply of charts and maps, other than the rough sketches from Dr. Hedin's pencil. The road is a far one, and the average reader will cling desperately to such familiar points as Calcutta, Darjeeling, Tashkent, and Kasgar in an attempt to prevent being swallowed up in a maze of "gombas," "nors," and "gols," and becoming lost in this wilderness of geography as the intrepid explorer did become on several occasions in reality.

Truly delightful however, are the many sketches, the work of Sven Hedin himself, which serve to illustrate his narrative. Of these there are nearly two hundred in number, supplemented by several full pages in color which are also good.

For those who read this book in the hope of discovering what manner of man its author is there awaits a keen disappointment. Throughout, Sven Hedin, the man, hides beneath a cloak of Mongol fabric, blue tinted glasses, and a smoke-screen of obscurity. An impending voyage of three years' duration awakes in him no greater emotions than sadness over the breaking of family ties. Animals and men succumb to the terrors of dizzying altitudes, thirst, and hunger, but one searches in vain for any response. Hedin is too busy with map case and pencil. His own emotions are no deeper than those of the very salt lakes into which he plunges his lead and line. But alas, perhaps we expect too much; are we not reading "My Life as an Explorer" and not the confessions of a sentimental wanderer?

One thing is positive. Before Sven Hedin set forth on his several expeditions into the heart of Asia the world was in complete darkness regarding several areas on this mighty continent. In solving these riddles for the geographer, Dr. Hedin accomplished much.

Sven Hedin, at least during the period of his journeys, devoted his life to the task of exploration. The grim shadow of death enshrouded him more than once in his battles to attain his purposes. Sacrifice and suffering were often his only companions. A beautiful and complete aluminum chest of medicines gave proof of his discretion in the matter of equipment, despite which he seems to have totally neglected to provide that one remarkable bromide so effective in these circumstances,—the saving sense of humor. One rather hopes on concluding "My Life as an Explorer" that the world will realize its indebtedness to one such as him and bestow on him the art of smiling. For, as efficient an explorer as he undoubtedly was, he failed to penetrate beneath the storm-beaten hides of his Tibetan hosts and discover there that fund of good nature and good-fellowship which proves their greatest salvation from the adversities of life on the roof of the world. Dr. Hedin seems to have considered Tibetans as necessary and hence unavoidable accessories of Tibet, and the gyrations of the compass needle suffered him to peer through that noble mass of humanity much as one would view a window display through a sheet of very valuable plate glass. The Living Buddha of Tahsilumpo alone seems to have awakened within him a sense of admiration and an effort at understanding, and the average reader will regret that the good Doctor could not have met more notables to distract him from his instrument cases.

The world knows much more concerning the geography of Central Asia than it did before the triumphs of Sven Hedin. And it is just this "much more" that one will find such delightful reading in his latest work, "My Life as an Explorer."

The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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Published weekly by Time, Inc., Briton Hadden, President, Henry S. Canby, Vice-president, Henry R. Luce, Secretary-Treasurer, Penton Building, Cleveland, Ohio. Subscription rate, per year, postpaid: In the U. S. and Mexico, $3.50; in Canada $4; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere, $4.50. Editorial offices, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y. For advertising rates, address Noble A. Cathcart, Advertising Manager, 25 West 45th Street, New York. Circulation Manager, Roy E. Larsen, Penton Building, Cleveland, Ohio. Entered as second-class matter, at the Post Office at Cleveland, Ohio, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Vol. II, No. 22

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Garfield and His Time

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF JAMES ABRAM GARFIELD. By THEODORE CLARKE SMITH. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1925. $12.

Reviewed by RALPH VOLNEY HARLOW
Boston University

THE mere mention of a new biography of Garfield is enough to arouse immediate interest, because of the peculiarly immoral tone of politics during much of his public career. If ever there was a period redolent of scandal, it was the decade and a half after the Civil War. The "gold corner," the "salary grab," the "whiskey ring," the Crédit Mobilier, the Hayes-Tilden election, and the "Star Route" frauds, eloquent tales of rottenness, still serve as stock illustrations of how seamy-sided American politics may become. As for the individual leaders of that day, altogether too many were fit subjects for barroom jokes or for grand jury investigations. "Jim" Fisk, "Ben" Butler, Oakes Ames, Don Cameron, Roscoe Conkling, and even James G. Blaine all contributed to produce what the late Professor Dunning so aptly called "the nadir of national disgrace."

Any opportunity for analyzing once more these products of the Reconstruction era would be valuable in itself; but in these volumes Professor Smith offers far more. The scandals are here, to be sure, but they are used almost as a foil for displaying the solid worth of a leader who could remain untarnished while reputations all around were being smirched or ruined. Garfield was creating a record that may well stir enthusiastic admiration. If this picture differs from those in the pages of Rhodes, Dunning, and Oberholtzer, there is enough evidence presented for its verification. Professor Smith has had free, unhampered access to hitherto unpublished Garfield papers, and these he has used in masterly fashion.

* * *

Garfield's early life, as a poor farmer's son and canal boat hand, is dealt with sensibly, without the shameless sentimentalism of campaign biographies. The struggle for an education, culminating in the years at Williams under Mark Hopkins, are so described as to bring out Garfield's persistence and initiative. In this part of the work Professor Smith makes it possible for the reader to follow intimately the various stages in Garfield's intellectual growth, from the school boy through the steps of theological controversialist, Campbellite teacher and preacher, chief of staff under Rosecrans, serious student of public finance in Congress, and President of the United States.

Throughout the book Professor Smith emphasizes again and again Garfield's qualities as a man. From an abundance of material the reader is impressed with Garfield's eminent sanity, downright common sense, admirable reasonableness, and thoroughgoing honesty. "Anyone," Smith writes, "who reads the hundreds upon hundreds of letters written by him to wife, family, colleagues, friends, acquaintances, gains an impression of a fine and simple integrity in the man." His shortcomings, which seem curiously few in the light of all this evidence, were due to errors of judgment, never to trickery or dishonesty. For a record that can stand such detailed analysis as Professor Smith offers in these volumes, no apologies are required.

In the exposition of Garfield's public career the author goes fully into almost every episode concerning which there has been either controversy or charge of unbecoming conduct. The story of the collapse of General Rosecrans during the fighting at Chickamauga brings out Garfield's loyalty as well as his ability; the evidence presented demolishes the charges against Garfield which Dana so assiduously circulated in the *Sun*. With similar thoroughness Professor Smith dissects the tissue of charges regarding the De Golyer pavement, "salary grab," and Crédit Mobilier accusations. Here again, by means of an abundance of detailed evidence, much of which is published for the first time, the author succeeds in completely exonerating Garfield. In this minute examination of Garfield's acts the author remains happily even tempered. In fact he seems to have adopted Garfield's own method of meeting charges, by a plain statement of facts, and by an appeal to reason and common sense.

In the constructive side of Garfield's work in Congress the book is especially illuminating. Here Garfield appears, if not as a great statesman, at least as an invaluable public servant, with attributes of true ability. As Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations he tried to inject an element of logic and reason into matters left frequently to mere chance, or corrupt bargaining. Garfield even went so far as to make a careful study of the English budget system, and to urge Congress to consider some of its advantages. Compared with the ordinary run of "pork" hunting Congressmen, Garfield stood on high ground.

After his election, Garfield began, in his usual methodical manner, to organize his administration. This work brought him into conflict with his erstwhile opponent in the Republican convention, Conkling, the leader of the New York "Stalwarts." In the struggle that followed over the principle of "Senatorial Courtesy," the new President appears as a man of strong convictions and unusual political skill. The story of his victory over the arrogant Senator from New York is a fascinating account of a definite policy clearly thought out and vigorously executed.

These two volumes will serve to elevate Garfield to a deservedly high rank among the ablest public officials of this country. Judged by the standards of any time, no matter how high, Garfield's record would be a striking one for the sensible ideals, unselfish motives, and sheer ability which consistently gave distinction to his work. But when judged by the standards of his own time, and when compared with the "political vermin" which infested the Grant administration, Garfield appears almost as a phenomenon.

An American Saga

BUFFALO DAYS. By COLONEL HOMER W. WHEELER. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1925. $4.

Reviewed by John G. Neihardt.
Author of "The Song of the Indian Wars."

HEROISM of the grander sort is the offspring of character and apparent fortuity, either of which without the other is barren of such deeds as men most delight to remember. No doubt this goes far toward explaining the ancient and universal need of fiction. Men, keenly conscious of their unrealized potentialities, merely resort to the expedient of remembering those things which, owing to the notorious carelessness of chance, have failed to happen. Even the perennial fish story, by this theory, is seen to be a valiant and humanly justifiable attempt to correct the sad delinquencies of Destiny.

However, in the life of an occasional man chance seems to be most active and obliging, with the result that fact becomes stranger and more thrilling than most fiction; for chance, being unhuman, is under no compulsion to seem plausible. Splendid things just happen, regardless of rules; and even those authoritative people, the critics, dare not object for once. Such a fortunate man is Homer W. Wheeler, to whom we are indebted for the stirring saga of his life, told honestly and therefore admirably told.

It was in Western Kansas during the spring of 1875 that Homer Wheeler, then post-trader at Fort Wallace, was launched upon a long and notable military career in a manner that broke all rules. News came to the fort that a band of Indians had been making trouble for the cattlemen down on Punished Woman's Creek and was bound north. When forty men of the Sixth Cavalry set forth in pursuit of the hostiles, Wheeler, being familiar with the country, volunteered to serve as guide. The hostile band was overtaken on the north fork of Sappa Creek, a confluent of the upper Republican, and what followed was a perfect little pocket classic of a battle. The Indians, conscious of their superior numbers and loath to lose their pony herd, held their ground, and there was close stubborn fighting. In Colonel Wheeler's frankly unliterary and thrilling account of the battle one must read carefully between the lines in order to appreciate the post-trader's full contribution to the victory that was won, for the Colonel makes no great matter of his heroism. We believe him when he tells us of his astonishment some weeks later upon receiving from the War Department a long envelope addressed to "Second Lieutenant Homer W. Wheeler." Though his military experience had been limited strictly to the Sappa Creek fight, he thus suddenly found himself in the company of West Pointers. It is the sort of thing that may happen in the world of Horatio W. Alger, but hardly anywhere else!

During the seven years previous to this event, Wheeler had served an arduous apprenticeship as a plainsman, hunting buffalo, and raising cattle in spite of thieves, wild Indians, and the unfriendly elements—all of which he sets forth with the simple but effective art of a campfire confidence. But this merely builds the colorful background of the man's personality for the brave march of the tale through those memorable years when the last great struggle for the buffalo pastures was taking place between the land-mad white men and the tribes of the plains. Wheeler's story is largely that of the Fifth Cavalry, as Colonel of which regiment he retired in 1911 after thirty-six years of service. With it he fought under Mackenzie in the desperate winter battle with Dull Knife's Cheyennes on the upper Powder, again distinguishing himself in an affair remarkable for heroism on both sides. With his regiment he visited the Custer field when the signs of that tragic event were still fresh, and helped to rebury the dead. In this connection he is able to give some important facts not generally known and a clearer light is thrown on Custer's conduct. He served in the campaign of 1877 against the Nez Percés when Chief Joseph was fighting his way toward Canada and freedom—a retreat that has been compared with that of the ten thousand Greeks and is certainly one of the most impressive episodes in our history. Men, whose names have in them something of song for those Americans who know and sincerely love their country's traditions, were this man's friends—Sheridan, Merrit, Crook, Mackenzie, Forsyth! Bill Hickok was his friend, and Cody.

"Buffalo Days," one of the last contemporary accounts of our heroic age, is in direct line of descent from "Captain Bonneville" and "Astoria." The descent is not a matter of merely literary values, but of the blood of the truly Homeric breed that will soon be gone with the bison.

DIARY OF A SEMI-PRECIOUS NOVELIST

Monday

AROSE at dawn—at ten fifteen—
Then took a plunge. (Refreshed the bean)
And wrote a page on my new novel.
If this time I don't make 'em grovel,
I'll eat the whole darn manuscript.
I liked my last, but something slipt.

Ate lunch at *Henri's* with a fan,
An aging flapper, tense and wan,
With literary dreams engrossed.
My fingers, did she know, are crossed,
For as Dean Howells used to say
"Don't criticize unless they pay."
(Only the surgeon who is feed.
Is privileged to make them bleed.)
So home, and read a book of Trollope's
And later ate a dish of scallops.....

Tuesday

Worked rather well, was interviewed
By a reporter, slightly stewed,
Who spoke at length of his delight
In "Weeds,"—a book I didn't write.
Later into the radio
Told what an author ought to know,
And hoped I might impress the sticks
Dined heartily at half past six
At Horn and Hardart's new café,
And called the net result a day.—
Although in some strange way it seemed
I still must edit what I dreamed,
And give the product style and finish—
No wonder that I'm growing thinnish...

Wednesday

Woke with the birds (an English sparrow)
Found I was frozen to the marrow,

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The bedclothes having walked a mile..
My toast was burnt; my coffee vile.
Tried hard to hit upon a title..
"The Spark,"—"The Dreamer,"—something vital;
"He Got The Job,"—a modern twist...
Finished the chapter where they kissed...

A grave young radical to tea
Demanding love and verse be free.
"But make an honest girl of art,"
I said, and hurt his little feelings. . .
"Follow the dictates of your heart,"
Ate several apples, and their peelings.

Thursday

By early post (the devil take her)
A woman calls upon her maker
To witness I'm a stogey hermit.
(I would be if I had a permit)..
My aunt is going to the Lido.
The iceman writes and signs it "Guido,"
And says "send cash, and not a check.."
A clipping bureau sends a peck
Of notices o'er which I loiter..
My photograph has grown a goitre...
Permission to reprint....a list..
Is craved by an anthologist..
(Should write and tell him he's a beat,
But still anthologists must eat!)
Oh! for a letter with a kick in...
Went breakfastless, but lunched on chicken...

Friday

The weather great, and for a cookie
Had been persuaded to play hookey,
But no one seemed to read my mind,
So stuck at the demnition grind,
Till complications of my hero's
Reduced me to a row of zeros.
Is that friend right who says you'd sell
Three times the books done half as well?

Then for my sins went out to dinner
(I must indeed have been a sinner)
For ever as the evening wore on,
Was I the victim of a moron. . .
"Why are your heroines neurotic?"
"Have publishers become despotic?"
"Don't movies make a lot of money?"
And at the time, it wasn't funny! . .

Saturday

Awoke with something of a sniffle.
Decided that my book was piffle,
And things like me were better scrapped..
A bit more cheerful when I napped,
But still abandoned literature.
Think I'll go in for something pure
Like politics, or cloaks and suits.
The little wop that shines my boots
Has found the secret of delight..
Maybe, it's just....he doesn't write.

Dined at the Ritz, on fatted calf,
Observing how the other half
Conducts itself when placed between you.
Wrote scraps of verse upon the menu
About a beggar and his wishes.

Sunday

Rained cats and dogs and little fishes.
Wrote all day long on soup and bread. .
Then staggered happily to bed...

ETHEL M. KELLEY

In a lively article, published only a short time ago in the *Student Leader*, a pamphlet issued by the Labor Club of Glasgow University, George Bernard Shaw remarked that the use of a rectorial election was to make "a periodical gesture of insult to academic education." The article was written in support of the candidacy of Sidney Webb, former president of the Board of Trade, for the lord rectorship of Glasgow University, a post for which Austen Chamberlain, Foreign Secretary, and G. K. Chesterton have also been nominated.

G. B. S. said Mr. Chamberlain would make an ideal rector and was certain to win hands down "unless he unexpectedly betrays cultural interests and knowledge of other things than the party game before polling day."

The BOWLING GREEN

SEVERAL friendly correspondents have supplied information on the matter of the Pine Tree Blight, which we suggested as a literary analogy. K. C. of Hartford, Conn., writes:—

The currant bush is an "intermediate host," if you know what that is. I didn't at your age. The pine tree blight (made in Germany) cannot be carried from pine to pine but must be communicated to the currant, which passes it on to the next pine victim.

President Moody of Middlebury College, Vermont, says:—

I noticed your reference to the pine tree. Instantly I thought that that partially correct reference could have been expanded if you had accepted our invitation to come to Bread Loaf for the English Summer Session, and there, in the midst of our thirty-one thousand acres of forest you could not have failed to absorb a certain amount of silvaculture and known that interesting story of the parasite upon the white pine (curiously enough it does not attack anything but the white pine) which is known as the White Pine Blister Rust. This parasite, or fungus, starts upon the white pine and then needs for the second stage of its development shelter or refuge upon either wild or domestic gooseberry or currant. Here it makes further progress, upon which it returns in a third stage to the white pine where it is fatal.

* * *

In regard to Neglected Books, Harry Patterson writes charmingly from Grand Island, Nebraska:—

I note occasional contributions from Arthur Colton in the *Saturday Review*. If you have any influence with that charming writer I wish you would persuade him, by fair means or foul, to publish a volume of essays. His novel "The Debatable Land," and at least one of his stories, "The Spiral Etone" in "Tioba and Other Tales," I still maintain are at the very topmost notch of American literature. And the tragedy of it is they are both long out of print while scores of volumes of less literary merit are starred as landmarks by the intelligentsia.

* * *

Another—and perhaps equally irrelevant—parable occurs to me. I am not a radio devotee, but I gather that there are certain parts of the world, certain seasons of the year, and certain times of the day, when the ether is specially full of Static; and that when that is so it is peculiarly difficult to get clear tone.

Exactly the same problem appears in literature. In the past few years, the literary ether has been jammed with a very curious and lively kind of Static, which has enormous possibilities for great expression when the proper adjustments can be made. But it also results in this, that if the installation—viz. the imagination of the writer—has not been justly tuned in to the exact undulation, the recital consists mostly of screams, howls, and yelps. As is most profitable in parables, the reader must apply instances and draw conclusions to suit his own taste.

* * *

Some of the literary experiments of our time have been tremendously thrilling, others have been tiresome and vain. I like to regard them as *hors d'œuvres*, antipastic appetizers for some possible magnificent feasting that caterers of the next decade may spread. Perhaps the great pieces of resistance, when they come, will not be so very different from what we have been nourished by in the past. But in any event it is well to enjoy *hors d'œuvres* for what they are, nor sate the appetite with them merely because the waiter is tardy. Nor is it fair to complain if they sometimes have a fishy flavor; for *hors d'œuvres* consist largely of small chippings of pungent fish.

* * *

By a refinement of coincidence, I happened to be in Philadelphia just when the last walls of Leary's blessed old bookshop were being delapidated. Surely no decently-constituted being would gaze without some honest melancholy upon the vanishing of the place where, in his teens, he first suspected the excitements of book-hunting. Tom Daly and I hung about the wrecked doorway, in a pious hope that some forgotten volume might be found in the rubbish. We remained, troveless, until bricks began falling on us. By the faces of Leary's staff, at their temporary home on Arch Street, we could see that the loss of the old building had been a heavy blow upon those inward sensibilities that men rarely mention, but cannot forbid their friends to suspect. And so we lay it as a charge upon the architect of the new Leary's, whoever he may be, to do a really fine and appropriate job in rebuilding on the old site. Not since the original Old Corner Bookstore disappeared in Boston has there been a problem of bookshop-architecture of such sentimental interest to The Trade. The new Leary's should be planned to remind us, in some way, of the old one; and if Philadelphia is in any degree aware of its treasures, the matter will have just consideration. We count on Leary's rising again (as Ben Franklin said in his own epitaph) in a new edition and a more glorious binding.

It was interesting to note, by the way, that the management of the Ben Franklin Hotel in Philly has set up a searchlight to play a nightly beam upon the statue of Ben which sits on the Chestnut Street pavement. This little stunt would have enormously pleased that humorous electrician. The only other incident of a few hours' rambling in Philadelphia that seems important to recount was finding a man selling broadside ballads (five for 10 cents) in front of the famous old Trocadero burlesque theatre. This was so Chaucerian an episode—as the Troc itself used to be Chaucerian in some of its flavors—that I give you the titles of the ballads. They were "The Face on the Barroom Floor," "The Girl With the Blue Velvet Band," "The Shooting of Dangerous Dan McGrew," "The Kid's Last Fight," "The Hell-Bound Train."

* * *

I was a little disheartened by a phrase in a letter from the Dean of a college greatly admired for its old traditions in *literae humaniores*. Introducing a young man said to be interested in literature, the Dean wrote "he is anxious to consult you in regard to the best way of proceeding to market his product." I am sure that the Dean, writing in haste, used the phrase innocently enough; and yet it hath an ominous sound.

* * *

The chief adventures of a few days in Atlantic City were (1) observing that the Atlantic City Truth Center is in the Riddle Building, and (2) buying a copy of "Selections from Landor" (the Golden Treasury Series) at Walter Landor's bookshop, where the young clerk believed the book was written by the owner of the store. Going thereafter to Northampton, Mass., Titania and I made the usual visit to the book-counters at Liggett's in the Grand Central Station, for train-reading. A collection of Jonathan Edwards's sermons for 25 cents seemed to me a good venture; and I learned for the first time what was the origin of Dr. Edwards's row with his congregation. It appears that he objected fiercely to the young people of Northampton being allowed to read all sorts of frolicsome and profane books. When his congregation outvoted him on this matter, he left prophesying the curses of hell on the town. His notion of hell was free access to miscellaneous literature; and it has been strictly fulfilled, for in Northampton you will now find one of the most charming and generously supplied bookstores in the world, where the delightful maidens of Smith College browse unrebuked upon volumes of all sorts; and the tall calf-bound set of Jonathan Edwards's works tarries upstairs in the attic, probably unsalable. I should like to know what were the books that so agitated Dr. Edwards; the 69 gallons of rum consumed by the workmen who built his church did not worry him at all. As for the Hampshire Book Shop, a store that lists in its catalogue of Christmas specialties such desirables as "Paradoxes and Problems," by John Donne, and Thomas Fuller's "Worthies," and Geoffrey Scott's "The Portrait of Zelide" may be seen to be no common mart.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

A literary find of the first importance has been made public by William A. Speck, Curator of the Speck Collection of Goetheana in the Yale library, in his announcement that he has discovered the author of the "Letters of Charlotte," the celebrated imitation of Goethe's "Sorrows of Werthher," which has remained anonymous for 150 years. The author's name, W. James, is signed to a letter secured by Mr. Speck from an English bookseller, addressed to Cadell, the famous 18th century publisher, who later brought out the "Letters of Charlotte." In it the writer proposes that Cadell publish the book, and indicates haste, as he wishes to return to his home in Hertfordshire.

For the era before the modern bestseller, the "Sorrows of Werther," printed in 1774, had an unprecedented sale. Not till "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and Byron's "Childe Harold" did it have a rival in this regard. Its reception in England was tremendous, leading to the publication of many pirated editions, and scores of imitations. The most noteworthy of the latter was the "Letters of Charlotte."

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Books of Special Interest

Again the "Best"

THE BEST POEMS OF 1924. Selected by THOMAS MOULT. Decorated by PHILIP HAGREEN. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1925. $2.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER
Editor of "Modern American Poetry"

THIS choosing the best of anything is not so much the anthologist's duty as his game. Some of the brotherhood (of which I blush to confess myself a member) play the game fairly enough; often a collection reflects a definite taste and personality; here and there a compiler seems actually to have gone to the original sources in search of material. But for the greater part most of the anthologists play "safe;" that is, he (and even more frequently she) follows a track blazed by a successful compilation or two, choosing the very selections which have done duty in all the previous anthologies. The editors' notion of "best" seems to be what has been most often copied by (and from) each other. Rarely does it occur to any of them to read the poets' own volumes with an eye to discovery. I—and I am sure I am not speaking for myself alone—would like to see an anthology which would pledge to print only such poems as have never appeared in any preceding collection—"Le Petit Anthologies des Refusées," so to speak. It would call for an editor of some initiative and a willingness to explore; the household favorites would disappear from his pages; Whitman's "Captain, my Captain" would vanish along with Kilmer's "Trees." But I am optimistic enough to believe that new things would be brought to light which would more than compensate for the absence of these hackneyed lines.

The magazine verse anthology is a step in this direction. Its editor has to choose directly and without a knowledge of what his *confrères* (and competitors) are going to select. There are, however, several reasons why these annual volumes are not as good as they should be. First, the compilers, in order not to be a year late, have to pick their entries in too great a hurry. Second, no one person could read *all* the verse published in America alone and maintain a critical proportion, and hence the final table of contents is a hodgepodge of the facile and smoothly mediocre. Third, the average editor of these haphazard assemblages is a man with little leisure and less individualized taste. Fourth and foremost not enough good verse is printed in the course of one year to fill the average one hundred and fifty pages, so the compiler (granting he would recognize the best) is forced to pad until the desired bulk is reached.

The result is the rather flavorless, bodiless affair which Thomas Moult offers us. The arrangement is without point, being neither alphabetical nor sequential. There is no index of any kind. There is not even an agreement between Mr. Moult and his publishers, for while the cover proudly announces Thomas Hardy as one of the poets represented, a double search of the book itself reveals not as much as a Wessex curse from the oracle of Dorchester. Mr. Moult has, in the local vernacular, bitten off more than he can chew. In an attempt to consider the poetry published in all the magazines both in England and in America, Mr. Moult, who has neither the experience of W. S. Braithwaite, the pioneer in this particular field, nor the sensitive apparatus of the delightful newcomer, L. A. G. Strong—(why, I wonder in a sudden parenthesis, are there simultaneously three different yearly anthologies gleaning the field of contemporary magazine verse? Is the market for poetry as great as all that? And why, since the anthologies happen to be American ventures, are two of the three editors native-born, resident Britishers?)—Mr. Moult, as I was saying, in his effort to skip nothing has missed almost everything. Some of the best poetry of the year (here again the *obiter dictum* is not merely mine) was produced by Robert Frost, Elinor Wylie, Winifred Welles, Amy Lowell, John Crowe Ransom, William Rose Benét, H. D., and Siegfried Sassoon. I find no hint of these poets in Mr. Moult's pretty pages. Among American publications, *The Measure* has printed more sheer lyrics, *The Fugitive* has disclosed more brilliant innovators, than any other magazine of verse. Yet Mr. Moult, although he quotes from the inconsequential *Lyric*, seems to be totally unaware of the existence of either of these.

Nevertheless, it would be unfair to imply that there is no merit in his on the whole undistinguished collection. While Carl [illegible] Marc, Conrad [illegible] and E. A. Robinson [illegible] their "best," they are [illegible]. And, among examples [illegible], one is pleased to find [illegible] delicate "Words Said in [illegible]," Mark Van Doren's "Crow," the exquisite "Songs of Farewell" by Hazel Hall, Joseph Auslander's cool "Enigma," Eda Lou Walton's "Without Figures," James Rorty's "City Moon." And Mr. Hagreen's decorations, though neither as many nor as whimsical as last year's, are altogether charming.

Intuitive Criticism

PENCILLINGS. By J. MIDDLETON MURRY. New York: Thomas Seltzer. 1925. $3.

Reviewed by ADRIAN RICHT

THE eminence of J. Middleton Murry as a critic is almost wholly due to an acute sympathy with the fundamental stresses and strains of existence which has given birth to his critical dogmata. This quality, though hardly ever explicit, is current in almost all his critical writings. Combined with a soundness of dicta which often, though not always, commends itself to the most opposite type of mind, it underlies the pronouncements to which he gives an individual and often passionate expression. A fine intellectual and emotional sincerity distinguishes him. If his intellect fails to penetrate, by reason of his temperament, to the psychic roots of many of his perceptions, he is at least not taken in by the more apparent mongers of mysticism, nor does he labor sophistically for the establishment of shallow commonplaces, as a less honest or acute mind with a similar intuition would be tempted to do. In consequence, his apprehensions are frequently sound, and almost always stimulating. Nor does his unconscious dogmatism inspire distrust; its transparency saves it, and it is too sweet and human a note to earn dismissal.

Chesterton, to whom a resemblance in manner and attitude, though never in content, could be traced in Murry's early days, could never be taken so fully into one's confidence—first, because he is not half so transparent, whatever his conscious efforts may be to that end, second, because the scope of his life has not been as large and as apparently near to the strains of our own as that of the younger man. The comparison with Chesterton may be questioned, but the similarity as well as the distinction between the two are implicit in Chesterton's expositions of Dickens, and Murry's more remote recourse to an eloquent study of Dostoievsky (as well as his later passionately undertaken study of Keats). Murry has come closer to that thing which, from what we sometimes suspect is incomplete memory of a youthful experience, Chesterton has continually tried to express.

The utter rationalist may gather from this comparison with Chesterton that it is futile for him to go to Murry for his critical judgments. If he expects purely objective valuations or holds a generally abstract idea of criticism, it is. Murry's critical essays are most essentially a literary form that allows for the expression of his fleeting apprehension of human values, the dizzying, fictional foundations of day to day faiths. It is criticism which is "literary" rather than scientific; its hypotheses are subjectively drawn and intuitive; it presents the kind of conclusion which is reached by introspection rather than experiment. Nevertheless, it is one of two attitudes by which literature may be judged. It may not be the more profitable ultimately, but there is this to be said for it that cannot be said for a good deal of analytical criticism which makes itself absurd: that it meets the great mass of traditionally great literature on its own ground. Not even the utter rationalist is without consciousness of the material of human fulfilments with which this literature (and Murry) is concerned, and in the measure that he is susceptible to dreams, builds Utopias that his own nature frustrates, and suffers the "checks and denials" of human existence, his recurring rationalist insight into these compensations for reality will give Murry a double quality for him. He may read him critically, or he may read appreciatively, with echos of his own experience, but the latter mood will be more fruitful. When Murry, agreeing with Havelock Ellis and Paul Valery, writes that "there is still room for a mysticism of life itself," the rationalist, if critically minded, will read on and enjoy blasting his more subtle misapprehensions of reality. But if experience of the day or hour has mellowed him, or made him suffer in a plebian way, he will read into that dogmatism the whole web of the critic's life so generously disclosed in almost everything he writes. He will forgive his deleterious irrationalities in their dress of obviousness, his basic dependence on intuition, for the delicate sympathy passionately expressed that he will find in him, the rich connotations of sublunary things.

To one who has known the later Murry of the *Adelphi*, the republication of the papers in "Pencillings" comes as a disappointment. They are, perhaps, happily intended for the readers of the *London Times* where most of them originally appeared, but with the exception of some twenty pages, there is very little in them to interest those who have found matter for stimulating or sober reflection in that strangely intimate little magazine which Murry has in some degree dedicated to the memory of his experience of life with Katherine Mansfield—that final episode of her death which seems to have completed his wayward spiritual development. The essays at hand appeared over three years ago, many of them are frankly journalistic; very few have subjects of significance. They have the frequent charm that work of a writer with Murry's talents must possess, but in only four essays do the pronouncements show evidence of consideration and its consequent weight. These four ("Literature and Science," "A new Humanism," "Fact and Fiction," and "Why Do Poets Write?") are not extraordinary, but here at least the author of the monthly essays in the *Adelphi* has not palpably diluted his gifts.

An Interesting Life

THE CONFESSIONS OF A REFORMER. By FREDERICK C. HOWE. New York: Charles E. Scribner's Sons. 1925. $3.50.

Reviewed by REXFORD GUY TUGWELL

MR. FREDERICK C. HOWE belongs to a generation we are in the way of forgetting. Governor Polk, Tom Johnson, Brand Whitlock, Lincoln Steffens, Ida Tarbell stalk through his pages, wraiths of an old righteousness which no longer counts among our programs of melioration. The political aspirations of Mr. Howe and his co-workers, in the old Cleveland days, were centered upon the city. The city was "the hope of democracy" as Mr. Howe said in the title of one of his earlier books. And the reformers assumed the burden of its redemption. The muckrakers among whom Lincoln Steffens and Ray Stannard Baker were foremost, carried on until the periodicals which supported them gave up, because they were bought out. The reformers held out until reversal of popular opinion threw them out of office. What the muckrakers and reformers wanted was to end the domination of boss-controlled machines, to establish home rule, to enter upon a program of the municipalization of utilities. But they found the forces they opposed too deeply entrenched, and the public, upon whom they must depend for support, too apathetic, too susceptible to spurious appeals. Tom Johnson, to whose program Mr. Howe had committed himself, was finally defeated and died a poor and lonely man. And with him died the spectacular phase of the movement.

Mr. Howe, being well over fifty, now has come to the past-regarding time of life. He has had opportunity to recover from the smart of defeat and he looks back upon all those years of strenuous effort not in an apologetic way, that would be putting it too strong, but in a mood of uncertainty concerning their results. He no longer feels the political millenium to be conditioned upon the initiative and referendum. He sees more clearly now the genuine dangers of municipal ownership. But he knows, and in this book he makes us see, that his was an interesting career to have had. He espoused the side of the conflict in those years which could lead only to hopeless fights and ultimately to martyrdom. To have begun in Methodist Meadville, to have gone from there to the Johns Hopkins of Woodrow Wilson and Richard T. Ely, to have failed in journalism and turned to the law as a stop-gap, and to have cast in one's lot with Tom Johnson in his fight with Mark Hanna, furnishes an epic no other scene than the American could provide.

The energies which were poured out in the decade of reforming were prodigious, out of all proportion, we can see now, to the results which were gained, or could have been gained, but it is at least something to be thankful for that such memoirs as that of Brand Whitlock and this of Frederick Howe, should come out of it. For, although, neither Mr. Whitlock nor Mr. Howe seem to perceive clearly the lessons their careers teach us, the choices of others inevitably will be influenced. If, by inference, we learn from them that democracy involves a local leadership which must be carefully organized, and that political forms and election machinery are of little importance; and if we learn that what we are clumsily trying to do is to control an industrial system the owners of which will bitterly contest each encroachment of public control, it will be enough. Their experience will serve to pose our contemporary problems in clearer fashion.

Studies in Religion

THE RELIGION OF YESTERDAY AND TOMORROW. By KIRSOPP LAKE. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1925. $2.

Reviewed by B. W. BACON
Yale University

A BOOK may contain more of wit than of wisdom and yet be of greater service than a saner work which through lack of sparkling epigram fails to awaken thought. Lake's book is clever—perhaps more. An example of his wit is the saying, "A society which has no prophets perishes from inanation, while if it has nothing else it dies of convulsions." The marvel is that he does not apply it to his own case. His prayer would be that of Moses: "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets." Paul had experience of "convulsions" among his Corinthian converts. He reminds them that "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," and that the enthusiastic vision of the individual must be tested by the judgment of the brotherhood.

Professor Lake has a new terminology to apply to the old distinction between conservatives, liberals, and radicals, between progress by evolution and by revolution. To his mind the religious forces of Christianity in our time are distributed between Fundamentalists, who demand conformity to the religion of yesterday, Experimentalists, who conform to nothing not verifiable in their own experience, and Institutionalists, who try to bridge the chasm between old faiths and new by infusing ancient formulæ with new meanings. He acknowledges no friend save the Experimentalist. Fundamentalists and Experimentalists between them are likely, he freely admits, to wreck the Church, destroying those institutions which have given it such influence as it has been able to exert for the leavening of the social order. Clement and Origen, who preserved the Church of their time by reinterpreting traditional Christianity in the terms of neo-Platonic thought, were (he tells us) the first Institutionalists! But he has small sympathy for church leaders of our time who assert the same right to infuse old forms with new meaning. The Dean of St. Paul's himself is not outspoken enough until he has fully renounced authority, whether of Plato or Christ.

"The Religion of Yesterday and Tomorrow" is spicy reading. Who does not occasionally enjoy the sallies of the *enfant terrible* of the neighbor's family? Nevertheless we seem to recall some things in the utterances of Plato which made him one of the greatest interpreters of "myth" and "poetry" that ever lived, infusing with new and higher meaning the dogma of his time. We could even fancy the despised Institutionalist appealing to the example of Jesus and Paul, who certainly did not leave the law and the prophets to the sense that had belonged to them from the first. Perhaps after all he is not least in the kingdom of heaven who teaches men how the Scriptures may be "fulfilled" in their essence without bondage to their form. Seeing it has pleased the Wisdom of God to send us "prophets and wise men" as well as "scribes," it may be that the "wise men" will mediate between Scripturalist and Experimentalist, so that the progress of religious thought may still be by evolution rather than revolution.

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Books of Special Interest

The New Russia

PEOPLE OF THE STEPPES. By RALPH FOX. Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Co. 1925. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN W. GASSSNER

FROM the Oxford of Newman and Lionel Johnson, Ralph Fox stepped into the Russia of Lenine; during the year 1922 and the beginning of 1923 he faced the problems of famine, disease, and the new economic policy in his capacity of relief-worker. It was an arduous undertaking, the major part of his work consisting of travels though the steppes in an effort to purchase enough horses to enable the peasants to plough their soil and thus forestall another year of starvation. He had to contend not merely with the inconvenience of not travelling in a Pullman but also with those obstacles of indigenous shrewdness, inefficiency, and circumvention which confront every Eastern traveler. His experiences were often entertaining, often irritating; above all, they were redolent of that romance which, to Englishmen, seems to cling to the very names of the author's itinerarium,—to the Khorasmian plain and silken Samarcand. Indeed, Mr. Fox seems to have acquired as many Sart love-songs as horses, and the quality of the former, if we may judge from the examples he submits, were excellent. Of the quality of the horses Mr. Fox, himself, was not always as enthusiastic. In this major section of the book there is no end of poetry; with a sled-like motion we glide for miles and miles to a forgotten lake, to the tents of the Kazaks, and to polyglot towns where the Russian revolutionist mingles with the faithful on their prayer-carpets, and strange fires of greed or idealism, bitterness or drunken boredom flicker.

Less beautiful than this account of extended galloping and this meeting with interesting people and little known races, but for the present probably more vital, is the last part of the volume, which takes us to the Russian village and to Moscow. In the villages we are brought face to face with the famine, in Moscow with the new economic policy. The relief that Mr. Fox and his party afforded was only the proverbial drop in the bucket. Three thousand horses had been bought with infinite trouble; one hundred and forty seven thousand more were needed to bring things to a pre-famine *status quo*. What these figures meant in terms of human misery we shall, fortunately for us, perhaps, never know. Back in the villages the author was compelled to harvest this lugubrious knowledge daily: "It is not cheerful to see a big bearded peasant break into tears before you because his horse has died and he will not be able to plough his land in the spring."

Mr. Fox maintains a humility not expected of youth when he does not presume to pass judgment upon Bolshevik theory and world-revolution, although his own sympathies are not always difficult to fathom. Instead, he confines his criticism largely to the specific problems he tried to alleviate. It is, therefore, as a relief-worker and not as a propagandist that he adds that the peasant "could not be expected to understand that maybe a letter to the papers by some outraged peer, or a sermon by an indignant parson, had condemned to death himself and all his family." It is chiefly from the point of view of relief-work that he condemns the "N. E. O." (New Economic Policy). Measures that restored many of the rights of property made expropriation for purposes of relief difficult if not impossible; the impatience of one who was confronted with situations which required immediate and vigorous action is comprehensible.

The relief-worker is, however, submerged in the man and his longings. Those who would know the "new" generation should read Mr. Fox before they imprecate. Shibboleths of revolution did not seal his eyes against a blatant truth. There is no balm in Gilead, or Russia, for youth.

What is a Play?

THE SCIENCE OF PLAYWRITING. By M. L. MALVINSKY.. Brentano's. 1925. $5.

Reviewed by JOSEPH SIPLEY

THERE is often much of value to be gained from the adventuring of a mind in unaccustomed fields; and Attorney Malevinsky comes with the glamour of a recent court triumph, to reveal the methods that helped him gain a judgment for plagiarism against "White Cargo." Too much of the court, indeed, clings to him still: the book is a plaintiff's brief, with dramatic critics as defendants; earlier opinions are endowed with all the authority of precedents, or dismissed with a wave as irrelevant, incompetent "and/or" immaterial; the author's first words are: "A lawyer's approach"; his last: "This question must be decided by the Circuit Court of Appeals."

Unfortunately, there is no supreme court of literature that can be asked to decide for all time, what constitutes a play. Mr. Malevinsky, however, has found it convenient in the course of his practice to analyze many dramas; from this activity he arrives at the "Algebraic Formula of a Play:

A. A basic emotion, or an element in/of a basic emotion constituting the theme; plus
B. Personified by character; plus
C. Motivated through: 1. Crucible. 2. Conflict. 3. Complication and/or intrigue to ultimate. 4. Crisis and 5. Climax; plus
D. Progressed by narrative, plot, or story; plus
E. Compartmented by derivative situations; plus
F. Dressed up in incidental detailed construction; plus
G. The underlying idea oriented through its constituent elements as dramaturgically expressed; plus
H. Articulated by words; plus
I. Imagined with artistry;—
Equals X—A PLAY."

The body of the book is devoted to the elaboration of this formula and the presentation of quotations and applications under each head. And it is surprising that an analysis as thorough as the present one—despite its inability to accord proper value to the personal element—should be drawn to such inept instances. Mr. Malevinsky spends several pages proving that, according to his formula, Shaw's "Fanny's First Play" is not a play—without recognizing that it is not the play he is thereby demolishing! He insists on limiting the term "theme" to "basic emotion," and therefore quarrels vehemently with all who legitimately extend it to incude the underlying idea. Yet when he attempts to list some "human emotions, or the elements in or of emotions," he presents an apparently haphazard group of verbs, adjectives, and nouns, the latter naming many things other than emotions.

Mr. Malevinsky's fundamental point of view is that every character in a play personifies a specific emotion. This attitude, taking no account of the complexity of life, suggesting rather a return to the mediaeval morality play, leads naturally to such other misunderstandings as are not incidental to the analysis of a particular play. This inability to admit other material than the single thread he has isolated, his insistence on "scientific" playwriting while he overlooks the art, and his poor applications of his general thesis, considerably lessen the value Mr. Malevinsky may claim for his volume. When he declares that loose thought and expression are cardinal sins, the lawyer should note that the cogency of this observation is not restricted to playwrights.

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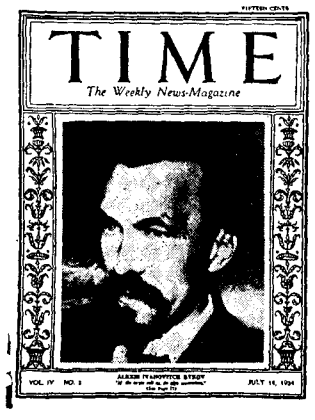

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A Letter from France

By Maurice Bourgeois

HERR FRITZ POMMER, director of [illegible] well-known German cinema corporation, was lately in Paris. On being asked why most of the German films—"Dr. Caligari's Cabinet," "Nosferatu," etc.—were so "morbid," dealing as they do with mental disease, Herr Pommer replied: "Since the war, we are all neurotic." I fancy this alleged psychopathic condition of our contemporaries accounts for the keen interest taken by the general public in normal and morbid psychology, and for the multiplication both of psychiatric studies of literary value and of literary works on psychiatric themes. Never, perhaps, has the interrelation of medicine and literature been so clearly brought out, so consistently harped upon. Maurice Duplay publishes "Nos Médecins," a vivid novel on the medical profession. In his valuable monograph on "Rémy de Gourmont Vu par son Médecin," Dr. Paul Voivenel (a regular contributor to *Le Mercure de France*) gives us an "essay in literary physiology." Les Parallèles, a new club founded by Jules Romains, brings together *littérateurs* interested in medicine and physicians interested in literature. The excellent *Chronique des Lettres Françaises* opens a consultation on "Medicine and Literature," to which reply, among others, Dr. Maurice de Fleury, the eminent author of "L'Angoisse Humaine," and "Pierre Dominique" (Dr. Lucchini, a distinguished alienist), the locale of whose very successful novel, "Notre-Dame de la Sagesse," is a French mental hospital. (Such, I understand, will be the case with "Et Nous Nous Sommes Aimés Là," the forthcoming novel of "Matei Roussou" Dr. Eunsilber, a Rumanian author writing in French and until lately editor of "Choses de Théâtre".) Of considerable interest to men of letters are Dr. Ernest Dupré's epoch-making "Pathologie de l'Imagination et de l'Emotivité," published posthumously; Dr. Pierre Janet's "Eléments de Psychologie Pathologique;" Dr. Lhermitte's "Les Fondements Biologiques de la Psychologie;" Drs. Allendy and Laforgue's "La Psychanalyse et les Névroses;" Dr. Charles Odier's "Le Complexe d'Oedipe et son Influence sur le Caractère, la Santé et la Destinée;" and the new annual symposium on psycho-analytical psychiatry entitled "L'Evolution Psychiatrique." The psychology of the drug addict is the subject of Dr. B. J. Logre's excellent little volume, "Toxicomanies;" of Mme. Tita Legrand's "Confessions d'une Opiomane" (prefaced by Dr. H. Nermord), and of "L'Homme et le Poison," by Léon Daudet (in his young days a student of medicine). In "Le Roman d'une Épidémie Parisienne, le Vol à l'Étalage," Dr. Antheaume denies the existence of kleptomania. Eugène Quinche, of *Le Petit Parisien*, reprints in book form his articles on the Haarmann case, while in "Chez les Fous" Albert Londres, the "prince of reporters," depicts with extraordinary realism the French lunatic asylums. Yve-Plessis's "La Psychose de François Villon" is an interesting application of psychiatry to one of the most elusive figures in French literary history. Of a less technical character, Pierre Dufay's well-documented volume on Eugène Hugo reveals that Victor Hugo's brother became insane on the very day when the poet married Adèle Foucher, whom Eugène secretly loved.

Much of the recent fiction written in the French language has also been more or less directly inspired by mental pathology. "Un Homme si Simple," by the Belgian writer, André Baillon, is a moving and largely autobiographical tale of mental disintegration. Mythomania is the theme of Eugène Montfort's "La Maîtresse Américaine;" mental confusion, of Albert Erlande's Pirandellian tale, "Le Crime et Son Excuse;" André Gybal's gruesome novel, "Luxure," ends with a scene of necrophilia. "Le Divertissement Provincial"—a most ironical title—by Henri de Régnier, of the French Academy, is, if I may so speak, a tragic "Main Street:" it is a study of the rural *ennui*, of *tedium vitae* leading to insanity and murder. The personnages in Ernest Tisserrand's "Un Second Cabinet de Portraits" and in Georges Oudard's "La Meilleure Maîtresse" live in an imaginary world; they are "waking dreamers" (technically called *schizoïdes*), a type admirably defined in Drs. Adrien Borel and Gilbert Robin's suggestive volume "Les Rêveurs Éveillés" (which is an expansion of their chapter on the same subject in "L'Évolution Psychiatrique)". Dr. Gilbert Robin, under his nom-de-plume "Gil Robin," is also a *littérateur* of talent, whose "Hôpital" is one of the ablest French short stories published since the war, and whose novel "La Femme et la Lune," poetically describes the "bipolarity" of a woman in love. Pierre Perdu's "Le Fou-Loup" and Philippe Soupault's "Le Bar de l'Amour" deal with cases of aboulia and remind us of Gortchakov's famous novel, "Oblomov," in which the hero finds everything so utterly useless that he does not even leave his bed.

Jean Prévost's "Tentative de Solitude" carries introspection to its logical end: suicide. In "L'Ancêtre," Eveline Le Maire depicts the obsession occasioned in a young girl by the resemblance between a gentleman whom she has met and the portrait of one of her mysterious ancestors. Raoul Stephan's "La Troublante Rencontre" describes the strange passion of a student for a semi-insane girl. "Les Exaltées" is the name which Binet-Valmer gives to the women whom the war or its consequences have a little "unhinged;" and "Les Désaxés, Chronique du Temps Présent," by Marcel Hamon (another doctor), also shows the havoc wrought in the minds of our contemporaries by the catastrophe. René Jouglet's "Les Confessions Amoureuses" and Yvon Lapaquellerie's "L'Angoisse et la Volupté" are typical specimens of psycho-analytical fiction. André Gaucher's "L'Obsédé" (which contains a preface by Freud and a letter from Professor Pierre Janet) is a passionate and somewhat specious application of psycho-analysis to the Philippe Daudet case, which the author views as a "drama of the *libido*."

In this enumeration of French fiction of a psychiatric or Freudian origin, I must give a place of honor to "La Bonifas," the admirable new novel of Jacques de Lacretelle, author of the memorable "Silbermann." Jacques de Lacretelle is one of the most promising "coming men" of the young generation of French writers, and "La Bonifas"—which some critics regard as a literary event almost as important as a new book by Marcel Proust—has been hailed as the novel of the year. The author has tackled a difficult and dangerous subject: the story of a spinster whose repressed and, to say the truth, unconscious masculine tendencies finally find their outlet and expression in—patriotism! A daring theme, which recalls those of André Gide and of the other writers of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. Jacques de Lacretelle has treated it with singular power and searching gifts of analysis. A resolute determinist, the author vigorously deduces from his heroine's initial nature all her subsequent actions in the story: not the least striking feature of the book is this close parallelism between the novelist's views on psychology and the theory of "mental constitutions" formulated by the leading French psychiatrists, notably by Achille-Delmas and Marcel Boll in their standard book on "La Personnalité Humaine."

I am sorry I have now but little space left to mention a few more books which I would like to review at greater length. The Rumanian writer, Panait Istrati, whom Romain Rolland "discovered" a few years ago on the Riviera after he had attempted to commit suicide, continues his series of "Récits d'Adrien Zograffi," the first two of which, "Kyra Kyralina" and "Oncle Anghel," were the revelation of last year. The new volume, "Présentation des Haidoucs" ("Haidouc" is a Magyar word designating a chivalrous outlaw: the famous Mandrin was a "haidouc") is a collection of legendary folk-tales of almost epic grandeur. Maurice-Verne, whose remarkable "Palace Hôtels" deals with the romance of American millionaires, has written a charming book on President Doumergue in his native environment; and Guy de Pierrefeux, in "Le Revenant," recalls many piquant anecdotes on M. Joseph Caillaux. Two Belgian writers, Gustave Fuss-Amoré and Maurice des Ombiaux, give us in "Montparnasse" a delightful encyclopedia of the quarter of the Dôme and the Rotonde, where so many Americans and other distinguished foreigners congregate. Lastly, I would most heartily recommend Professor Georges Gromaire's monumental work on "L'Occupation Allemande en France," an exceptionally painstaking and well-balanced historical study, which all those inclined to excessive leniency towards Germany will do well to ponder.

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Foreign Literature

A Royal Tragedy

WILHELM DER ZWEITE. By EMIL LUDWIG. Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt. 1925.

Reviewed by A. W. G. RANDALL

WHETHER Herr Emil Ludwig, author of this, the first biography of the ex-Kaiser, has been taking a leaf out of Mr. Lytton Strachey's "Queen Victoria" or Monsieur André Maurois's "Ariel," we do not know, but it certainly seems like it. For here, in spite of the long list of authorities with which the book is prefaced, and the heavy "documentation" which occurs on the succeeding pages, we have an easy, attractive narrative, and a well-constructed drama, justifiably divided into the five acts of the orthodox tragedy. Herr Ludwig might well have taken as his sub-title "The Tragedy of an Emperor," for, in his presentation, although not wholly sympathetic to his chief character, he has given us a veritable Hamlet of real life, a figure whose character was fate from first to last, and a figure whose character was, moreover, moulded in the earliest years of its formation by physical and psychological factors foreign to Shakespeare's play.

The predominant elements in the formation of the Emperor's character, according to Herr Ludwig, who produces an astonishing amount of evidence in support of his thesis, were his physical infirmity, the withered arm he always tried to conceal, and the deep-rooted antagonism to his mother, the overbearing daughter of Queen Victoria of England, the indirect cause, according to German opinion of the time, of her husband's death. The withered arm produced an inferiority complex, out of which grew that arrogance, bombast, and inflated rhetoric with which, for many, the Kaiser's name was exclusively associated. The mere fact that he was deprived of active participation in manly pursuits increased his military outlook on life, fostered that too outspoken pride in "my army." But underlying it all was a mind that was essentially distrustful of itself, timid and diffident, and with a generosity and sensitiveness with which timidity is often connected. Left to itself, Herr Ludwig considers, this gentler quality would have predominated at the critical moments in Germany's history. As it was, it did manifest itself often and helped to give the Emperor a reputation for instability. But it could never prevail upon the influence of the various advisers who surrounded him, over the counsel of a Tirpitz, a Bülow, and the long-drawn-out tragedy had to be developed to its fatal conclusion.

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The conjunction of the inferiority complex with the second element in the drama, the antagonism to the Empress Victoria—this, at the crisis in Germany's fortunes and his own, produced in William II the fatal direction of policy for which penance is now being done in exile at Doorn. The leading-strings in which Wilhelm was kept by his mother, the fancied unkindness done to his beloved father, the long exclusion from responsibility, the reiteration of the virtues of England—all these combined to produce a deep-seated hatred, not so much of the English people as of the English dynasty, a hatred which the royal uncle, Edward VII, did nothing to remove. Herr Ludwig goes so far as to find in the quarrels between uncle and nephew one of the chief causes of the European War, which is a dramatist's exaggeration, taking no account of a more solid political rivalry and Germany's expansionist policy to which the cooler-headed statesmen of the time only saw disastrous conclusion. But that the embittered attitude of the Hohenzollern to England and his failure to understand the nature of the Englishman contributed no little to a similar failure on the part of his subjects—this cannot be doubted. Herr Ludwig recounts vividly the occasion when, at the Cowes yacht races, the Emperor accused the Englishmen of cheating, the very last charge to bring against English sportsmen. The charge not only rankled; it illustrated the frame of mind which professed the utmost astonishment, in August, 1914, that England would be willing to go to war for "a scrap of paper."

And so the wheels of fate rolled on in their appointed way. What the inferiority complex produced in regard to foreign policy showed itself also in domestic affairs, right to the end. The growing desperation of the German people, their determination on a more democratic régime, and finally their demand to end the war even at the price of the overthrow of the Hohenzollern dynasty—these were realities that the Emperor was constitutionally incapable of facing, and Herr Ludwig shows us the formation of that desperate, yet pathetic project, when all was lost, to gather a small army for a *coup d'état* in Berlin. But Prince Max von Baden had made such a solution impossible, and the way to the Dutch frontier had to be chosen. Here the Emperor, almost alone, was compelled to wait for six hours while the frontier guards confirmed his identity and obtained the necessary instructions from their government. During that long delay, Herr Ludwig justifiably imagines, what a past did not rise up before the Emperor's mind, as before that of a drowning man! All the bright promise, the real and worthy achievements, the ambitions and the proud claims of the head of a great Empire—all reduced to nothingness in that little frontier-station. It is, from a literary point of view, a fitting end to a remarkable drama. Herr Ludwig, earlier in his biography, and by his former play, "Die Entlassung," which depicted the dropping of the pilot Bismarck by the young headstrong Emperor, just arrived to power, had shown that he regarded the Emperor with a critical, even a hostile, eye, but in this culmination of his narrative the pitying element is uppermost, and the Kaiser stands out as victim rather than as villain. Yes, we shall place this book with "Queen Victoria" and Monsieur Maurois's "Life of Shelley" as one of the three most remarkable biographies that have appeared in Europe since 1918.

A Danish Novel

MARTHA AND MARIA. By J. ANKER LARSEN. Copenhagen: Gyldendals. 1925.

Reviewed by JULIUS MORITZEN

CAN a prize novel ever be a great novel? Can competitive bookwriting, with judges setting up certain standards—and limitations—at any time measure up to what springs full-fledged from the creative mind? It is a moot question. Publishers apparently have their own opinion, reading the answer mainly in dollars and cents, while the reading public vacillates between what it thinks, and what, in the case of a "Best Seller," for instance, it believes it ought to think, and say.

If then in the case of an author winning a big money prize, his book creates a situation fraught with uncertainty as to its real merit, what can be expected of a successor to such a fortunate novel? J. Anker Larsen, the Danish writer whose "The Philosopher's Stone" carried off the Gyldendal award of 70,000 kroner two years ago, makes pertinent the above inquiry. It is to be recalled at the same time that of the many manuscripts submitted, nine others besides J. Anker Larsen's, were considered of such merit that the publishers brought them out almost simultaneously. At once the query arose in Denmark whether some of these less fortunate writers should not have had the prize instead of the winner.

However, let us take a look at "Martha and Maria." The reader guesses without difficulty that the theme has a religious slant. Still, it is not a religious book in any direct sense. Two sisters grow up together in the Danish countryside, only to be parted and not come together until the very close of the book. There is a great deal of philosophizing, as might be expected of the author of "The Philosopher's Stone." Like their namesakes of the Bible, this Martha and this Maria are temperamentally unlike.

J. Anker Larsen evidently has had the advantage that comes with greater leisure, where a lump sum of money adds to a roseate future. He has been painstaking with his composition, and there are some passages of rare beauty. Writers no longer do their best work when confined to a garret. Travel, observation, an easy mind all contribute in permitting literary production of modern times to be more carefully planned and executed. The author of "Martha and Maria" has not been slow to take advantage of his good fortune.

There are Danish critics who place "Martha and Maria" far above "The Philosopher's Stone" as a work of art. J. Anker Larsen appears to have become more of a psychologist, and less introspective than in his former novel. This by no means indicates that his reflective manner is less acute. It is a veritable treat to follow him as he shows us the mind of Maria as in a mirror, and presents us with Martha's commonplace, yet beautiful, personality.

The author, who in "The Philosopher's Stone" made us acquainted with the lives of two boys grown to manhood and exposed to the vicissitudes of existence, in "Martha and Maria" draws aside the curtain of the stage where stood later two girls whose womanhood reveals what fate had in store for them. It is easily seen, besides, that while the longer space is devoted to Maria, because her life work is to give voice to the author's philosophy, it is for Martha that he has the greater predeliction.

Whatever of symbolism may here have been attempted, the fact stands out that J. Anker Larsen is intensely in earnest. As to the message he aims to give to the world, it is too early to judge of its effect. In due time American readers will be able to place their own estimate on a book that at the present moment is creating no end of discussion in its native land.

Brief Essays

ENSAYOS. By SALVADOR NOVO. Privately printed in the Talleres Gráficos de la Nación, Mexico. 1925.

PLEASANT to discover that Mr. Morley's Chinese sage loses no savor in Spanish! A cosmopolitan young essayist of Mexico, Salvador Novo, has not only transferred some of Vachel Lindsay's onomatopoetics into that melodious tongue, but, captivated by the wisdom of the renowned Mandarin, has translated a number of the "Translations from the Chinese." The task has been neatly done, and is surprisingly successful.

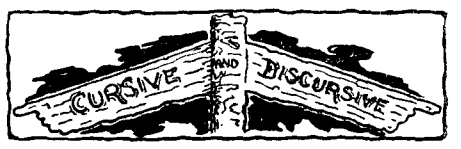
The greater part of the book is made up of brief essays contributed to newspapers. They are evidence of wide interests and an alert mind, but they lack any delicacy of fancy or depth of perception, and it is probable that the author's later work will more fully merit a binding of such craftsmanship. Mr. Novo dwells upon the delights of one's first pair of glasses, the history of boxing and its points of contact with bullfighting, the emotions accompanying a warm bath, the decline of the literary and artistic sort of bed (hastened, he suspects, by the Californian tendency to make beds disappear altogether), and the growing Nordic effeminacy of Mexican bread. He lightly sketches the historical developments of whiskers and the Epicurean implications of gayly painted coffins. The humor would be more subtle if the stream of Spanish were not repeatedly made turgid by the pointless introduction of withered American slang.

The late Pancho Villa and Christopher Morley are discussed in contiguous pages, as befits two subjects of song, both gentlemen of gusto. But Mr. Morley's name stands out more than the chieftain's because in Spanish CH is one letter and he thus reaps a double initial.

In the section of the book devoted to his own poems, Mr. Novo reveals some power of irony and achieves numerous vivid images. The first gray hair appears "suddenly, like a cold greeting from the one most beloved." "Alas—we drown the freshness of the morning in the first cigarette!" And in a cemetery:

If shipwrecke were to come to us! We walk
Even as Jesus over the waters;
Yet we can see the masts
Of craft which have already sunk
Into this sea.

"A book of flowing plume and flame" one critic has called Jacques d'Arnoux's "Paroles d'un Revenant" (Plon), which though a war book is, much more than that, a book built on a young man's personality and force under practically desperate circumstances, the paralysis of the lower half of his body when he fell with his airplane within sixty yards of the German trenches and lay there helpless for twenty-six hours. His ardent recital of his experiences, and those of others, his determination to survive and be useful—despite five years of martyrdom in the hospitals—has commanded respectful attention, although books about the war have almost ceased to do so. The development of will power will always be a pertinent subject, and Arnoux's book is a demonstration of what he has made and is making of a broken young life, of the triumph of faith and resolution over the most sombre disaster. It is not a book of literature, it is a manual of living.



AFTER getting up and wandering around the room, opening packages of books, throwing the wrappers all over the floor, looking out of the window, thumbing several magazines, thinking a bit about the futility of life, sharpening a pencil, getting a drink of water, lighting a cigarette, putting it out, walking around the room again, rearranging the books on our desk, sitting for several minutes in a stupor, taking out our watch and looking at the time, adding up the total deposits in our bank book and wishing we had all that money now, lighting another cigarette, putting it out, reading a paragraph about Professor Saintsbury and wishing we had all his learning—or his wines—giving a thought or two to that cozy little place down in Greenwich Village where you can get a Bacardi cocktail, rearranging the pens on our ink-stand, wondering how on earth we'll be able to give anybody any Christmas presents this year, thinking of two lines for a poem and discarding them, telling ourselves to remember to get a new tube of toothpaste before we go home to night, answering a call on the telephone and telling them no we are not Mr. Doukobrian, scratching ourself between the shoulder blades, wondering how on earth some of these fellers write a column every day when it's so hard to write one every week, asking one of our confrères for some matches, spilling our ash tray and crawling around the floor picking up the scattered stubs, taking a couple of books down off the shelves and putting them back again, telling that funny story we heard last night to one of the men in the office, getting another drink of water, lighting another cigarette, looking out of the window again, seeing if we could remember a certain popular song of 1899 by whistling a snatch of it, deciding we couldn't, letting up the window-blind, pulling it down again, listening to a story Henry Canby is telling, drawing several pictures on a sheet of copy paper, deciding that there's a nail coming through on the inside of the heel of our right shoe, telling ourselves to remember,—well, after about forty-five minutes of that sort of thing we have decided to examine our literary pretensions in the light of the new descriptive catalogue of The Modern Library. (The Modern Library Inc., New York).

The latest volumes of this pocket library, which so recently changed hands—it used, of course, to be on the list of Boni & Liveright—are "The Philosophy of William James" and "H. M. S. Pinafore and Other Plays" by W. S. Gilbert.

We salute the memory of James, but we don't seem qualified to talk about him. Let's turn to Mr. Gilbert. Mr. Gilbert Gabriel comments cogently upon the state of comic opera librettos since Sir William. He concludes that until a truly intelligent manager arises or The Theatre Guild goes in for a genuine reconception of satirical operetta," or new audiences dare, "librettos will remain no more than a shrill, treble trilling in one everlasting fugue and variations on the theme of the female leg." We agree, and are grateful because he has furnished us a solid paragraph.

Well, we shall carry this edition of "Pinafore," "Patience," "The Yeoman of the Guard," and "Ruddigore" around with us, till Mr. A. A. Milne writes the comic opera libretto we think he could charm the roofs off the houses with. May it be soon!

But we were going to examine our literary pretensions in the light of that catalogue. My, how we waste time! It was eight years ago that The Modern Library began its pocket reprints of the world's best books. They have amassed a remarkable list of titles. What do these titles mean to us? Let us take them alphabetically, as they are arranged.

Here, to start with, is Andreiev, of whom, —alas!—we have never read a word. Here is Sherwood Anderson, of whom we have read much. We liked one book by Gertrude Atherton, "The Splendid Idle Forties," which does not appear here. We know a little about the art of Rodin and of Aubrey Beardsley. 40%!

Balzac the Great is less to us than he should be, Baudelaire's poetry we know in translation. Will Beebe we distinctly liked on meeting him, but we have read none of his books through. Of ghost stories we are fond, and of some of the Best. Thus also of the Best Humorous Stories. Blake's poems we may fairly claim to know pretty well; so too Emily Jane Bronte's "Wuthering Heights," though not,—again, alas!—"The Way of All Flesh." 50%!

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Edward Carpenter is a sealed book to us, save for hearsay. Not so James Branch Cabell. We have read about everything he ever wrote. And that goes for Lewis Carroll and G. K. Chesterton, though not for Chekhov. It goes for Stephen Crane too. But Contemporary Science rebukes us with a perfect blank. Say 60%!

Not d'Annunzio nor Daudet, but John Davidson,—yes! He was one of the admirations of our youth. Dostoievsky's "Crime and Punishment" we regard as one of the greatest books in the world, but do not know his "Poor People," which is listed here. Norman Douglas's "South Wind" we have yet to read, though we have sampled his admirable writing in "They Went." Dowson, Dreiser, Dunsany we may claim to know pretty well. Not Dumas, *fils!* Havelock Ellis we know only by hearsay, Fabre we have dipped into, Marjorie Fleming we early conned, but Flaubert and Anatole France we know not well. 40%!

We have read a little of Gautier's poetry (in translation), of Frenssen nothing, of W. L. George nothing, of W. S. Gilbert a deal, we have read Gissing's "Papers of Henry Ryecroft." The De Goncourts? Yes, we read "Renée Mauperin," and it has left little impression. Gorky we are not familiar with, but we are with the novels of Thomas Hardy. We have never read Ben Hecht's "Eric Dorn." 40%!

Hudson's "Green Mansions" is a strange and familiar wonder to us. Ibsen we know pretty well, Henry James hardly at all. Kipling,—no need to ask us that. We have read everything of Kipling's. But Andreas Latzko we know only through what others have said. D. H. Lawrence's "Sons and Lovers" we think one of the greatest novels of our time. Pierre Loti and John Macy may go by. Maeterlinck we read a lot of in the dim past, and Maupassant, and Meredith; but with Molière we have no familiarity. 55%!

Arthur Morrison means something to us. George Moore does not, though all around us voices have been raised shouting for him. But, by Golly, we mean to tackle his "Heloise and Abelard" in two volumes, of which we have just got a set. Nietzche has never affected our prosaic life. We have read part of Ouida's "A Winter City," because the good Carl Van Vechten sent it to us. On Psychoanalysis we are not sufficiently informed to speak, but the plays of Eugene O'Neill have always roused our enthusiasm. About 33⅓%!

Here are Thomas Paine and Walter Pater. Walter's "Renaissance" we know in part. We have never read Paine. We *have* read some of Pepys, of Poe almost everything, Prévost's "Manon Lescaut" (a superb book!), of Schnitzler and Schopenhauer nothing, of Shaw, naturally, a whole lot. 45%!

We have not perused May Sinclair's "The Belfry," which, we heard, had bats in it,—though her other work we have greatly enjoyed, in the main. Strindberg's plays we scarcely know. But we read Sudermann's "Song of Songs" and were impressed by its power. Swinburne and Francis Thompson are, of course, two of our prime enthusiasms. Tolstoy means nothing to us, though his "War and Peace" still stares us rebukingly in the face, and we must read it. Of Turgeniev we have read "Smoke." Van Loon we know as a remarkable modern entertainer. Villon we appreciate, Voltaire less. H. G. Wells and Walt Whitman and Oscar Wilde we can claim to know pretty well. And during the war we read many of President Wilson's addresses and public papers, though we have not gone into the Woman Question with Ellen Key, et. al. The best thing we ever read on that subject was Rebecca West's article on Ellen Key in *The New Republic*. Yeats is, of course, one of our idols. 70%!

Thus we make an end. We are certainly not very proud of our average. It comes to about 48%! So here are the books we have resolved to read in the New Year, to better that average a little: Some Balzac, some more Dostoievsky, "The Way of All Flesh," "Sapho," "Camille," "Madame Bovary," "The Crime of Silvestre Bonnard," "Thais," "Mlle. De Maupin," "A Bed of Roses," "Daisy Miller," "Beyond Good and Evil," "Marius the Epicurean," "The Ego and His Own," "Studies in Pessimism," "Dame Care," "Candide," "Dorian Gray."

That looks to us, as we glance back at it, like a pretty wicked program. But our education seems to have been neglected. We have evidently never bcome sophisticated. *Nous*—just watch our smoke! No, we can't help it if Daisy Miller does look uncomfortable in that gathering. It isn't *our* fault. She's in the Modern Library.

—W. R. B.

The New Books

Books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Art

THE PRINCE OF WALES AND OTHER FAMOUS AMERICANS. By MIGUEL COVARRUBIAS. Knopf. 1925. $3.

Carl Van Vechten explains in his introduction to this book of brilliant modern caricatures how Sherrill Schell first introduced him to the little Mexican wonder. The astonishing grotesques of this artist, which are often, nevertheless, such astonishing likenesses, are well-known by now to the artistic world of Manhattan. Mr. Covarrubias, as Mr. Van Vechten says, is possessed of a certain clairvoyance, and his pen sometimes seems dipped in acid. His sense of significant contours is amazing, unerringly he knows just what to overemphasize. His economy of means is likewise remarkable. These are in no sense kindly portraits, but they are filled with Gargantuan humor. He has hit off our alien nobs of the arts with many howling successes. The presentments of Alec Woollcott and of Fred Stone are alone worth the price of admission. The few portraits in full color, of "Wales," of Coolidge, of Van Vechten, and Broun are simply gorgeous.

Belles Lettres

PETER PANTHEISM. By ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER. Macmillan. 1925. $2.

One is tempted to say that in "Peter Pantheism" the author is schauffler than ever; for this collection contains that intriguing essay, "Unborn Words," and converts one anew to the creation of polysyllables to fill in the gaps between thought and vocabulary. It is needless to add that, as a verb, "schauffle" means to write easily, charmingly, and amusingly on any and every subject under the sun. The propaganda for the adoption of foreign and portmanteau words is as convincing as when the essay first appeared, calling forth any number of acclaiming letters, in the *Century Magazine*. No plea could be too strong for the incorporation into English of the Arabic phrase, "aiouna belskoot" (aid me by your silence). "Chutzpah," too, is endeared to one after the story. "'If,' says a Jew to a Gentile friend, 'you should go home, shoot your mother, murder your father, and then come into the court and plead for clemency on the ground that you were an orphan,—that would be Chutzpah.'" And even the most bitter Chauvinist must admit some virtue in a people who can say, "nous fiffo' clockerons a quatre heurs et demi."

Judging from the loving mention made in several late biographies to school readers of twenty or thirty years ago, those particular texts have had a decided influence on the citizens of this republic. Mr. Schauffler in "The Most Important Book in the World" makes his bow to "Appleton's reinforced by Sheldon's Fifth." Here we meet The Boy who would not be a Silent Liar and his fit companion Faithful Fido the goody-goody dog; here too is Little Charley with the dew-drop in his hair and on his breast a rose-bud gathered early, and other equally commendable characters. What shudders they must endure at being placed cheek by jowl with the eight word verse which somehow finds itself in the same essay:

How odd
Of God
To choose
The Jews.

The other essays in the volume will be no disappointment to admirers of "Skum o' the Earth," "Fiddler's Luck," and "The Musical Amateur." Under the surface joviality runs a criticism of life and letters which he who runs may—or may not—read.

BROADWAY TRANSLATIONS. THE HISTORY OF THE DAMNABLE LIFE AND DESERVED DEATH OF DOCTOR JOHN FAUSTUS, TOGETHER WITH THE SECOND REPORT OF FAUSTUS. Both modernized and edited by William Rose Dutton. 1925. $3.

IL NOVELLINO. THE HUNDRED OLD TALES. Translated from the Italian by Edward Storer. The same.

In modernizing the old English Faust Book of 1592 (itself a slightly amended reprint of an earlier lost edition) and the supplementary pamphlet of 1594, Dr. Rose has wisely refrained from modernizing more than the spelling and punctuation, allowing the quaintly awkward Elizabethan style to remain unchanged. Hence we have the work before us practically as Marlowe read it, when, responding to its vogue as a best seller, he utilized it as the basis for his greatest play. In his valuable introduction, Dr. Rose traces the amazing growth of the Faust myth within fifty years from the first contemporary references to an actual mountebank and charlatan, named George, not John, Faustus, to the full-fledged story of the great magician leagued with the powers of Hell. Dr. Rose judiciously supports the traditional view which traces many features of the tale to Lutheran influence as against the recent ingenious but unconvincing arguments of Eugen Wolff that its author was a Catholic.

"The Hundred Old Tales," anonymously collected at about the end of the thirteenth century and in circulation by word of mouth for no one knows how long before, may still be read with profit in the twentieth century. Their simplicity rebukes our verbiage. Thus the Lady of Shalott is here no rhyme-drenched wax figure from the Tennyson *musée*, but one who writes in words almost worthy of Dante: "To all the Knights of the Round Table this lady of Shalott sends greetings as to the gentlest folk in the world. And if you would know why I have come to this end, it is for the finest knight in the world and the most villainous, that is my Lord Sir Lancelot of the Lake, whom I did not know how to beg that he should have pity on me. So I died for loving well as you can see." The gruesome story by Petronius of the wife who gives her dead husband to be hanged by her living lover loses nothing of its power in the mediæval re-telling, while, in lighter vein, the famous tale of the pear-tree, with its charming dialogue between God and St. Peter, remains quite unsurpassed by any *conte drolatique* of later date. The translation has well preserved the directness, sincerity, and naiveté of the unknown thirteenth century writer or writers.

A CHRISTMAS MIRACLE AND GOD BLESS THIS HOUSE. By ANNA HEMPSTEAD BRANCH. (Poet's Guild Series) Adelphi Company. 1925.

These are two ceremonies for Christmas eve, prepared by one of the most distinguished American poets, and dedicated to C. I. MacColl, Head Worker of Christodora House, in which settlement Miss Branch is vitally interested. The ceremonies are taken from the Feast Day Series presented in Magic Casements, the little Poets' Playhouse at Christodora House.

The little ceremonies are preceded by a poem by Robert Herrick, with Thomas Hardy's beautiful, simple poem "The Oxen" as a colophon. Before "God Bless Our House: A Ceremony of the Christian Candle" three old Christian hymns are prefixed, "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen," "The First Nowell," and "We Three Kings From Orient Are."

The Candle Ceremony is written with much simple, devotional beauty and the little Christmas Miracle Play is altogether charming. The small book has a beautiful gold jacket, and makes a quaint and distinctive Christmas remembrance.

THE BRIGHT ISLANDS. By PADRAIC COLUM. Yale University Press. 1925. $2.50.

This is the second volume of Hawaiian folk-lore gathered and retold by Padraic Colum for the Yale University Press. The first was called "At the Gateway of the Day" and dealt exclusively with mythological subjects of the Hawaiian people. In the present volume, Mr. Colum has extended his researches to include New Zealand and the Islands of the South Pacific, and has drawn from historical sources as well as mythological. Mr. Colum has rewritten the tales in his simple, flowing, fairy-story style that will make it a delight to children who have finished Grimm and Andersen and are looking for new worlds to conquer. From the ethnological standpoint "The Bright Islands" is of less value than "At the Gateway of the Day," as Mr. Colum has here reworked much material that had already reached print.

Biography

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF JOHN MYTTON, ESQ. OF HALSTON, SHROPSHIRE. By "NIMROD," with colored plates after the original illustrations by H. ALKEN and T. J. RAWLINS. Longmans, Green. 1925. $7.50.

The "Life of John Mytton" might have aptly been entitled "An Apology for the Life of John Mytton." "Nimrod" (Charles J. Apperley) who wrote this remarkable book may be freely conceded the very first place among sporting writers and in the

(*Continued on next page*)

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The New Books

Biography

(*Continued from preceding page*)

"Life of Mytton" he did his best, as a gentleman and a sportsman, to excuse the eccentricities, to call them by the mildest possible term, of his friend and fellow sportsman, John Mytton. For Mytton, in spite of his pedigree of five centuries and the fact that, as "Nimrod" states in his opening paragraph, he was undoubtedly "thorough-bred," was also, undoubtedly a blackguard. A marvel of physical endurance, he was also a cruel practical joker, brutal alike to his cattle and to the two unfortunate women who were, in succession, his wives. The deeds recorded in this book were deeds involving great courage and endurance, but they were not deeds of useful heroism. On the contrary John Mytton was a waster, for he not only dissipated his material possessions and died in a debtors' prison, but he sinned the more deeply by abusing the mind and body which should have placed him high among the councils of men.

Yet the "Life of John Mytton" is a great book, appealing especially to the sportsman but not without interest for the general reader. The early editions of this book are greatly prized by collectors for the beautiful colored plates which they contain by that greatest of sporting artists, Henry Alken and T. J. Rawlins. The reproductions of these plates in the present edition are more than satisfactory and the volume as a whole is well adapted to the perpetuation of the fame of "Neck or Nothing" John Mytton.

A LIFETIME WITH MARK TWAIN. The Memories of Katy Leary, for thirty years his faithful and devoted servant. Written by MARY LAWTON. Harcourt, Brace. 1925. $3.50.

In this volume Mary Lawton after a luscious foreword retires from the scene save to act as scribe for Katy Leary, whose reminiscences are given in her own illiterate style. Katy seems to have been a kind of Johannes Factotum in the Clemens household, combining the functions of upper servant, seamstress, nurse, and *valet de chambre*. We get from her what we might expect—much information about Mark Twain's habits and clothes, and not a great deal else. That he was inordinately fond of cigars, billiards, and cats; that he tried the patience of his wife by incessant swearing; that he ordered matchboxes by the hundred instead of the dozen; that if he disliked a shirt he would throw it out of the window, thus obliging Katy to descend surreptitiously and rescue it; of these and similar trifles—many of them already sufficiently well-known, the book is made up. Nevertheless what may be called the Katy Leary side of Mark Twain does stand out clearly. He apparently always regarded the Gorki episode—the one black stain on his reputation—in the same way that Katy does, as merely an unfortunate incident for Gorki. His pride in personal relations with royalty, while utterly devoid of respect for the theory of royalty, which is the only thing about it that deserves respect, is an attitude that Katy would probably have shared in the same circumstances. More pleasantly, the qualities of native kindliness and unselfishness characterized both master and servant. Malice simply did not exist in either. The contrast is striking between this volume and similar recent accounts, particularly that of Brousson, of the private life of Anatole France. The American servant is as much superior ethically as she is inferior mentally to the French secretary; the American satirist lived on a much higher plane and thought on a much lower plane than did the great Frenchman.

A GYPSY OF THE HORN. By REX CLEMENTS. Houghton Mifflin. 1925.

The lover of sailing ships, the dreamer of long voyages about an unspoiled world, may cruise with Rex Clements on the good bark *Arethusa* with a sense of complete enjoyment. Captain Clements, we judge he is now a master mariner, in steam, has set down the things a sailor once made note of on his voyages. The record is of historic importance because all that now remains to us of a great period of voyaging is such narratives as this. He goes into great and valuable detail, and his are pages filled with sea lore, all but forgotten by most men who now steam over the world.

It may be valuable to the readers of the *Saturday Review* to here set down a list of the books of sailing ship voyages, fact and fiction, which seem destined to be the sole records remaining with us of a time when the beauty of the sea was matched by the grace and beauty of the creations men fashioned for their voyages.

Moby Dick, Melville.
The Nigger of The Narcissus, Conrad.
Two Years Before the Mast, Dana.
The Cruise of the Cachelot, Bullen.
The Brassbounder, Bone.
The Passage of The Bark Sappho, Patterson.
Around Cape Horne, Lubbock.
Under Sail, Riesenberg.

and to this list we must add, A Gypsy of The Horn.

Another sea narrative for which we have been waiting is David Bone's "The *Queer Fellow*," a book destined to take its place in the Valhalla of sail.

THOMAS CARTWRIGHT. By *A. F. Scott Pearson.* Cambridge University Press (Macmillan).
SIR CHARLES NAPIER. By *T. Rice Holmes.* Cambridge University Press (Macmillan).
THEM WAS THE DAYS. By *Owen P. White.* Minton, Balch. $3.
TOM MOORE'S DIARY. Edited by *J. B. Priestley.* Macmillan. $2.50.
WASHINGTON. By *Lucy Foster Madison.* Penn. $3.50.
THE NEW PILGRIM'S PROGRESS. By *Sydney T. Skidmore.* Dorrance. $2.
CARDINAL NEWMAN. By *Bertram Newman.* Century. $2.
THE DAYS I KNEW. By *Lillie Langtry.* Doran. $5 net.
FAMOUS FILM FOLK. By *Charles Donald Fox.* Doran. $2 net.
THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF WILLIAM REED HUNTINGTON. Century. $5.
THE MASTER LIFE. By *Livingstone.* Doran. $2.50 net.
BEAU BRUMMEL. By *Lewis Melville.* Doran. $7.50 net.

Drama

THE SCHOOL THEATRE. By ROY MITCHELL. Brentano's. 1925. $1.75.

This small volume should prove a practical assistant to directors of school and amateur dramatic groups throughout the country. With simple clarity the theory and practice of play production is outlined, accompanied by excellent diagrams and sketches of stage sets, completed, and in the process of construction. There are also detailed notes on costume, make-up, lighting and the choice of plays. A list of the more familiar, actable plays for Little Theatre Groups is also included, as well as the names and addresses of many play publishers and firms where theatrical supplies may be purchased.

THE ROMANCE OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE. By MARY CAROLINE CRAWFORD. Little, Brown. 1925. $4.

For all those readers who have had no previous acquaintance with the history of the stage in America, from the early Colonial days to the present time, this will prove an entertaining and more or less instructive book. But all the facts in it, and a good many more, have been published repeatedly in the innumerable volumes which have been published from time to time, on the plays and personalities of the theatre. Of most, if not all of them, Mary Caroline Crawford appears to have been an ardent, if not always a discerning student, and here we have the result of her gleanings, which, by the way have not been confined exclusively to the American field. She writes vivaciously, and, on the whole, with accuracy, though not always with the finest sense of proportion, and as she has been careful to make the most of all available anecdote her pages offer plenty of light and fairly amazing reading for all to whom the matter is not too familiar. But it is only right to add that she covers her ground pretty fully, and gives due credit to her authorities. There is not much, of present interest or value, connected with the origins and development of the American theatre, its dramatists, plays, and performers from the earliest beginnings down to the present time, which is left unnoticed in her excerpts. Of the really first rate actors of a bygone generation of whom she speaks she is not old enough to have had any personal experience. To the theatrical luminaries of the contemporary theatre she is at least sufficiently complimentary. She has availed herself industriously of the work of previous explorers, but to the sum of printed knowledge she has practically nothing to add of any consequence.

H. M. S. PINAFORE AND OTHER PLAYS. By W. S. GILBERT. New York: The Modern Library. 1925. 95 cents.

Gilbert has never had any successful imitators. There is only one Gilbert. Mr. Gilbert Gabriel presents the reasons for this in his introduction to this new title in the Modern Library. He knows his Gilbert. The plays reprinted here, with the original illustrations, are as delightful as ever. Here is a pocket-size Gilbert worth having.

THE VORTEX. By *Noel Coward.* Harpers. $1.50.
ELIZABETHAN PLAYWRIGHTS. By *Felix E. Schelling.* Harpers. $2.75.
MAIN CURRENTS OF MODERN FRENCH DRAMA. By *Hugh A. Smith.* Holt. $3.

Economics

LABOR POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES STEEL CORPORATION. By CHARLES A. GULICK, JR. Longmans, Green. 1925.

Mr. Gulick covers his field with readable thoroughness and intelligence. The questions of hours, wages, non-union and welfare policies are comprehensively treated in separate chapters, and his introduction details the early history of the trust in the combining period. If the sociological implications of his subject are somewhat slighted, it is with the author's full recognition of the limitations he has set upon himself, and sources that apply to this important aspect of the subject are given to supplement his own passing references. Mr. Gulick's book can be recommended as an intelligent mean between the too often unscientific use of data in the Interchurch Report on the Steel Strike, and Judge Gary's official utterances. The fact that his findings more often lie nearer the former than the latter extreme is the measure of his condemnation of the Corporation's "paternalistic and autocratic" policy, judging it, as he does, from the standpoint of a believer in industrial democracy.

THE OIL INDUSTRY AND THE COMPETITIVE SYSTEM. By GEORGE WARD STOCKING. Houghton Mifflin Company. 1925.

A famous American sociologist, Franklin H. Giddings, once said that with respect to natural resources the American people had acted like a lot of wild asses in the wilderness. What they could not eat they trampled down. A confirmation of this indictment, in so far as it applies to our petroleum resources is found in this book by Mr. Stocking. Apparently, had we exercised our ingenuity to devise a scheme for the most wasteful possible method of tapping our rich subterranean stores of oil and gas we could hardly improve on the method of feverish competitive drilling which from the beginning has characterized American practice. Whatever advantages may be generally claimed for a competitive system of production, Mr. Stocking shows that in the crude-oil industry that system fails lamentably. This new book is a valuable addition to an already notable list of prize essays known as the Hart, Schaffner & Marx series.

WAGES AND THE FAMILY. By PAUL H. DOUGLAS. University of Chicago. 1925. $3.

In this book Mr. Douglas elaborates and systematizes his argument for the family wage system of which he has made himself champion in this country.

The argument summarized is that if we are to pay a wage based upon needs, the existing "family of five" basis, generally depended upon, is practically useless. The family consisting of two adults and three dependent children is far from typical. In both England and America more than a quarter of the adult male workers are unmarried; and from a half to two-thirds of the married workers have less than three children. In paying a wage, then, based upon a family of five, we meet the needs exactly of about one-tenth of our family groups; also we provide for about forty-seven million fictitious dependents; and we fail to provide for all those children who happen into families of more than three—about forty percent of all our children. The upshot of a wage, then, based upon a statistical family of five would be that forty percent of our children must live below a defensible standard while sixty percent of our families receive much more than a living wage.

It seems clear enough that we should exhibit something less than wisdom in social policy if we were to go on assuming that five is an accurate standard family for wage determination. It is in relatively few cases, however, that wages are fixed on a cost of living basis at all. Certainly organized workers have been reluctant to accept it as a standard, so that it is perhaps not likely that statistical facts concerning the actual make up of American families will have much relevance in wage disputes very soon. But as a matter of theory it is well worth arguing whether any family allowance system would be good social policy. It would certainly involve a high degree of governmental control — which could only be state control unless our constitution were changed; and would, therefore bring about unprecedented relations between the individual and his state government. Theorists of another opinion than Mr. Douglas would also object that for the advancement of the working class it would seem better to leave its groups free for bargaining than to set up so firm a principle of limitation as the family wage system might in the end turn out to be.

Mr. Douglas meets objections in a comprehensive chapter, however, and feels ultimately after much study of the system in Australia, France, and other countries where it is in at least partial use that it offers more advantages than disadvantages. The great thing, he says, would be the elimination of poverty. If it promises that no economist will object. And it is certain at least that Mr. Douglas has begun a discussion that will last for many years and run through many pages of print. No one who cares to be informed at the beginning can afford to miss this early setting out of the problem.

Fiction

SASHKA JIGOULEFF. By LEONID ANDREYEV. Translated from the Russian by LUBA HICKS. McBride. 1925. $2.50.

Leonid Andreiev had in his lifetime the unique distinction of being the most widely read, the most highly paid, and the most unpopular author in Russia. Each new work was greeted by a chorus of critical disapproval but lived on to flout the critics. An unqestionable genius, writing "The Black Maskers" in a single week, dictating "Anathema" eight hours at a stretch, Andreiev's bitter, impassioned spirit lived in the perpetual throes of a spiritual rebellion which, unlike that of most of his compatriots, was directed for the most part not only against social conditions but against the inherent limitations and miseries of man in a hostile universe. He possessed a kind of turbulent cosmic vision without attaining or even desiring anything approaching cosmic calm. Deeply under the influence of Edgar Allan Poe, his idealism, like that of the American, was fascinated by the spectacle of its own defeat, and, when real horror was wanting, developed meretricious and theatrical substitutes.

"Sashka Jigouleff" is the story of a young aristocrat, brought up in comfort and refinement, whose sympathy for the disinherited peasantry leads him to perceive the injustice of his own advantages. With Russian logic, he feels that he has no more right to his superior education and higher moral standards than to his property—all equally the possessions of a privileged class. Hence he throws them all over and becomes the ruthless leader of a band of robbers, waging relentless war upon the members of his own caste—but for an ideal which his followers cannot understand and which leads them eventually to betray him to justice. But what is this "justice" and where is it? Not among the upholders of the existing order, not among the revolting peasantry, not even in the confused soul of Sashka Jigouleff. It is a cry in the air, a ghostly phantom, which Andreiev, like his hero, pursued but never found.

DAYS OF '49. By GORDON YOUNG. Doran. 1925. $2.

Mr. Young's pictorial chronicle of the California gold rush dwarfs to insignificance preceding novels which have attempted, even with moderate success, to reconstruct the life of that fabulous and

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THE SURRY FAMILY. By HELEN R. HULL. Macmillan. $2. 1925.

Obviously not a novel of great stature, it is the virtue of "The Surry Family," without being profound, that it gives touching and vital and exact glimpses of life. It is the story of a family small enough for each of its members to be presented with some or much detail, and for their interrelationships to be pictured with an intimacy and thoroughness that a larger canvas might find impossible. As a result, there is a pathos about the Surrys which belongs to any family of limited possibilities and thwarted hopes that one comes to know and understand. Their lives, so complicated by the trivial—and yet the irreconcilable—differences of humanity, evoke feelings that transcend their particular case. For one is not merely surrendering to a sentimental impulse in one's compassionate understanding of the Surrys; one is more accurately responding to their reality.

For as a family the Surrys are alive. Separately, no doubt, they are sometimes unreal; none of them is done quite so perfectly that you know him, that you feel what he would do in a given situation without his doing it. But gathered into a group, where each one actually does this or that, the Surrys are convincing people, and the story of their fortunes, even of their individual fortunes, is a convincing story. Miss Hull's method never sounds the depths or illuminates the darkest places, but at least it is a sturdy one, exempt from mannerisms and inchoate experimentation.

A greater novelist, with more penetrating strokes, might in fewer words have told us more. But in terms of its own sober construction, "The Surry Family" is put together with a good deal of skill, even of compactness. Its realism, apparently so typi-

(*Continued on next page*)

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Letters in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to Mrs. Becker, c o *The Saturday Review.*

A BALANCED RATION

BROOMSTICKS AND OTHER TALES. By Walter de la Mare (Knopf).

AMERICANA. By Milton Waldman (Holt).

ISRAEL. By Ludwig Lewisohn (Boni & Liveright).

S. S. A., Providence, R. I., asks for books with things for a growing boy to do.

THERE is a new edition with a new preface to celebrate the 45th printing of Dan Beard's classic "The American Boy's Handy Book" (Scribner), and he has further developed one department of this subject in his new book, "Do It Yourself" (Lippincott), whose spirited preface sets forth his conviction that outdoor sports are an important part in a boy's real education, for conduct and for character. This book includes fishing, camping, and collecting. "Scientific Amusements and Experiments," by Charles R. Gibson (Lippincott), following his "Electrical Amusements" (Lippincott), and A. Neeley Hall's "Home Handiwork for Boys" (Doran), are books that have given a marked deference to my manner in conversing with boys today. They look so young and so small and I think as I behold them, you have no doubt constructed a water motor, a radio set, and an enlarging camera, as Mr. Hall's book has shown you, and what's more, you probably make the thing work. So I treat them with respect tinged with awe; it is making me popular with boys.

M. E. R., New Orleans, La., asks for books with pictures and descriptions of ships, for a boy in a sea-port town who is much interested in them.

FOR a little boy there is "The Story of the Ship," published by McLaughlin, with illustrations in color. For somewhat older boys—it will do for almost any age—there is Charles Cartwright's "The Boys' Book of Ships" (Dutton) with many pictures, a compendium of the subject, and his "The Tale of Our Merchant Ships" (Dutton) for a boy a little older. "The Marvel Book of American Ships" (Stokes) is a large volume with twelve plates in color and 110 black and white illustrations, the text by two naval experts, Frank Evans and Orton Jackson; it is authoritative but intended for young people's use. For yet older readers there are—among many—"Ships of the Seven Seas," by Daniel Hawthorne (Doubleday, Page), which has 100 line drawings by Francis Rigney, and Captain Bone's guide for passengers to distinguish ships seen at sea, "The Lookout Man" (Harcourt, Brace), which has pictures and silhouettes against the horizon.

Three newly elected club presidents, in Iowa, Michigan, and North Dakota, write to ask, as one expresses it, "for a guide to go by, as this is my first time and I feel timid."

I HAVE had questions like that often enough in the past, most often at this time of the year, but not the proper book to recommend for them. Now one has just appeared, that is, so far as I can see, exactly the thing. "The Business of Being a Club Woman" is by Alice Ames Winter, President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs from 1920 to 1924. One by one the problems of organization and management are set forth and discussed so lucidly that from now on I shall see that it is brought to the attention not only of all these "timid" officials-elect who write to me, but to any clubwoman who would like to see her club realize its possibilities. The Century Company publishes it.

A. S. E., Philadelphia, asks what books about the Bible have been lately published that should be added to the equipment of a Bible Class with a growing library.

ANYONE who questions the present popularity of the Bible as literature should scan this row of books, all of recent appearance. It begins with the new translation of "The Old Testament," by Rev. Professor James Moffatt (Doran), in two comfortably sized volumes that come in various bindings. This I can testify is effective in reviving interest in Old Testament history or, for that matter, in creating it for some middle-aged readers who had never realized the tempestuous, not to say ferocious beauty of these tales of war, love, and worship, until they rediscovered them in swinging straightaway narrative, to whose modern speech the touch of Scots gives curiously apt color. Professor Edgar J. Goodspeed's colloquial translation of the New Testament has been followed by his popular—and scholarly—story of the translations of the New Testament and the scholars who made them, from Tyndale four hundred years ago, through Coverdale, Rogers, the King James, and the private translations to this year's "The Making of the English New Testament," Professor Goodspeed's book, which is published by the University of Chicago, which issued his translation. There is a new edition of Sherman and Kent's "Children's Bible" (Scribner) whose much reduced price now brings this color-illustrated book within the reach of Sunday-school prizes or presents. A large-type abridgement (not paraphrased) for public or private reading is "The Living Word," edited by H. H. Saunders (Century), adapted to reading the Bible through a section a day: Sheldon's "Everyday Bible" (Crowell) is such an abridgement of the Revised Version, but the pocket size makes the type small.

"Human Nature and the Gospel," by William Lyon Phelps (Scribner), follows his "Human Nature in the Bible:" the feature of these books is that they would make anyone rush to read the Scriptures. "Ten Short Stories from the Bible," by Charles R. Brown, Dean of Yale Divinity School (Century), would be useful as inspiration for Sunday school talks or Sunday night sermons: one easily identifies Esther as "The Girl Who Risked It," but you must have been brought up as I was to recognize Saul as "The King With Green Eyes" or to know who was the "Soldier Who Fought Against the Stars." No, no, of course it wasn't Joshua.

"Who's Who in the Bible," by E. Fletcher Allen (Putnam), is a set of brief biographical sketches useful for reference. "Women of the Bible," is used as title for two books, one by Isabella Reid Buchanan (Appleton), the other by Annie Russell Marble (Century). I often recommend these to study-clubs making out programs. "The Greatest Book in the World," by A. E. Newton (Little, Brown), begins with a discursive and entertaining essay on the history of the Bible as a printed book. A small book lately from Scribner's, "Literature of the New Testa-

(*Continued on next page*)

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Seven hundred copies have been printed for the New York University Press by William Edwin Rudge; direct from Caslon linotype slugs on 100% B. R. Rag paper; 36 pages of printed matter and plates, each page 14 x 20 inches in size; bound in board covers, gray cloth back, gray Roma sides, stamped in gold. Price: $15.00.

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The Reader's Guide

(*Continued from preceding page*)

ment," by Herbert and Carl Purinton, could be used to good purpose as a course of study for a Bible class, and has questions and subjects for discussion: centering in the life and message of Jesus, it brings the life and literature of the time into the picture.

I am constantly asked about books as gifts to clergymen, and since the first of November, when Lord Charnwood's "According to St. John" was published by Little, Brown, it has been this book that I have first suggested in most instances. Let the lay reader begin with the last chapter, the reasoned and spiritual confession of belief set down in his "Epilogue," and it will almost certainly send him to the front of the book, to go straight through a thoughtful and stimulating presentment of the background, message, and authorship of the Fourth Gospel. "Sermons of a Chemist," by E. E. Slosson (Harcourt, Brace), would be a boon to any class-leader or minister: the texts are from Scripture, the discourses (given to many audiences) a successful blend of old-fashioned religion, new-fashioned science, and humorous kindheartedness.

M.I.H., Beacon, N. Y., and R.N., Lee's Summit, Mo., ask who is Louise Jordan Miln. The former adds "I have an idea she is an Englishwoman."

MRS. MILN, whose "Feast of Lanterns," "In a Shantung Garden," and now a new novel "Ruben and Ivy Sen," all published by Stokes, show so unusual an acquaintance with Chinese customs and character, was born in New England and educated at Vassar. She went on the stage and toured not only this country but the Far East, remaining in China for some time and marrying Mr. Miln, an English actor, whom she met there. She has lived in London for the past twenty years: returning visitors say she is one of the most inspiring and delightful of hostesses. She has several children, one an aviator in the war, another invalided by bomb raids.

P.B., Boston, Mass., read some fifteen years ago a book called "Miss Minerva and William Green Hill," has forgotten author and publisher, and much wishes to get another copy.

MISS MINERVA and William Green Hill," by Frances Calhoun, was published by Reilly & Lee in 1899, has sold over 400,000 copies and is still going. Nine years after the author's death Emma Speed Sampson took up the writing, for the same publishers, of a series of continuations that have been very popular. The first was "Billy and the Major," and the one for 1925, "Miss Minerva Broadcasts Billy," deals, as might be inferred, with a homemade radio set.

MISS Belle Boas of Horace Mann School writes that she saw at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs at Paris this summer a portfolio showing various designs of *toile de jouy* and that a letter to Mme. Jeanne Kay, who has charge of the book-stall in the museum, will bring to the Cleveland inquirer information on text, plates, and price. Miss Marion Arnold of the Providence Public Library asks if the Cleveland inquirer has seen "Decorative Textiles," by George Leland Hunter. This has a chapter on chintzes and cretonnes with a short account of the Jouy prints; it is beautifully illustrated. In "Historic Textile Fabrics," by Richard Glazier, there is a plate showing French cotton hangings printed by Oberkampf of Jouy with a short paragraph in the text relating to the prints: "The finest European fabrics were undoubtedly those produced by Oberkampf at Jouy, near Versailles, from 1760 to 1843," it begins, and speaks of their "daintiness and reticence of design."

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL, the poet, was, like me, struck by the question "who wrote Deirdre," but he guessed better than I what book the inquirer had in mind. "In your reply," says he, "you mentioned the works of that name by Synge and Yeats and the gorgeous thing by James Stephens. It occurs to me that if it had been one of those, he would have had the name of the author from whatever source supplied him with the name of the book. Therefore it may be that his inquiry concerns the 'Deirdre' published in 1877 by Roberts Brothers of Boston in their 'No Names Series,' whose title of course referred to the fact that the names of the authors were withheld. This 'Deirdre' was written by Dr. Robert Dwyer Joyce, an exiled Irish patriot and scholar, brother of that other Joyce who wrote works of Irish history, genealogy, and so forth. At its publication in 1877 it was hailed by the critics of the time as a poem equal to any produced in this country. It is a lengthy work in rhymed couplets, iambic pentameters, or some such meter."

M. B., North Craftsbury, Vt., asks for Indian poems for a school program and for books on this subject.

AMERICAN Indian Love Lyrics," selected by Nellie Barnes (Macmillan), is a beautifully printed collection just from the press; the introduction is by Mary Austin, whose "The American Rhythm" (Harcourt, Brace) is a book with which to begin the reference list. The most representative source book for the study of Indian lyrics is "The Indian's Book," by Natalie Curtis Burlin (Harper, 1923), and from the notes to Miss Barnes's collection an excellent reading-list including books and magazine articles may be compiled. She has added an essay on "Poetic Forms in American Indian Lyrics." Some weeks since, *A. K. S., Brooklyn,* on behalf of a British author, relayed a call for the best book on Indian songs, in which, after some years spent in collecting negro spirituals, he had become interested. I advised Mrs. Burlin's collection, and this new one might well be sent over after it. Speaking of Indian matters, E. M. Gearhart has a new little book of "Skalalatoot Stories" (Stratford) as told by Indian grandfathers from their own grandfathers' telling. This word means, we are told, spirits that dwell in the shadows: it sounds as if they jumped out at you slightly on the last syllable.

The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

cal, seems on second thought rather exceptional. No one else in just this way could have pictured family life on a Michigan farm with the same immediacy and point. There are simple passages in the book which command, in their own fashion, an emotional response; there are pictures of groping and frustration and resignment to fate whose very lack of emphasis is touching and sure. We are left at the end with three people in circumstances just good enough to make life acceptable, and with a fourth in circumstances that hold promise but small illusion. It is an impregnable ending to a book which records the drama of unimaginative lives.

MORE ACES. *A Compilation.* Putnam. $2.
THE LOVE RACK. By *Cecil Roberts.* Stokes. $2.
PRAIRIE GOLD. By *Harold Bindloss.* Stokes. $2.
CLOSED ALL NIGHT. By *Paul Morand.* Seltzer. $2.
CLING OF THE CLAY. By *Milton Hayes.* Adelphi.

History

FACTORS IN AMERICAN HISTORY. By A. F. POLLARD. Macmillan. 1925. $2.50.

The essays in this volume, delivered originally as addresses to British audiences, have a value out of all proportion to their size, not because of any new facts contributed, but because of the abundant generalizations. In the preface, Professor Pollard warns his readers that he "never had the temerity" to speak before an American audience on the subject of American history. His modesty, however, is the modesty of the scholar duly hampered by a knowledge of the facts. In viewing American history he has a double advantage: that of present detachment added to a rare acquaintance with and understanding of the whole mediæval background.

His aim in dealing with these "factors" is to interpret some of the distinctive forces which have molded the United States into a nation. Among the matters treated are the Revolution, the Constitution, American nationality, the frontier, slavery, "imperialism," and "idealism." These topics the author analyzes with admirable taste and restraint. Being free from the traditions and untroubled by the stock conventions of the subject, he can point out some of the more devastating bits of absurdity in American professions and policies. Often witty, always pleasant and sensible, he offers suggestion after suggestion that will make American students his debtors.

The contributions of an Englishman to an understanding of American life may sometimes be indispensable; "The American Commonwealth" still bears witness to that. With this volume of "Factors" as an introduction, Professor Pollard may be sure of a cordial welcome should he ever acquire sufficient temerity to give American audiences the privilege of hearing him lecture on the history of their own country.

Points of View

Boboism

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
Sir:

I have just read The Bowling Green on "Boboism" and want to whoop.

On my returns from abroad I have found it possible for a brief time to look upon our scene with the curious critical eye of a foreigner. This is a delightful, edifying sensation which I have even tried deliberately to prolong. But that I have found, is impossible; as impossible as to attempt, while they are putting the rubber mask on your face, to continue to observe, critically, the process of anaesthesia. You wake up, some weeks later, to find yourself back in very familiar surroundings, without knowing just how you got there or just when you lost that exciting pier-head vision.

That the antics of our critics appear to Morley bizarre is, I suspect, due to the fact that for the moment he is looking upon them with an unfamiliar eye. Not long ago, I was talking with a young Englishman here on his first visit, who had just witnessed, for the first time, one of our college football games. "And what," he marvelled, "were those curious puppets, dancing about, capering before the stands?" I explained the office of the cheer-leader — to extort enthusiasm, — to amass, to organize enthusiasm. He marvelled, I say.

Just now the critic of modern literature seems an unmitigated enthusiast—a Pollyanna who will only be glad. If a new book is very, very disagreeable indeed, he may just not notice it. But he seems determined to see only virtues in every new book he takes up. Willa Cather's newest makes an excellent case in point. He breaks into cheers on the slightest provocation.

But even the gladdest critic has his moments. On the days when he has a bit of a liver and simply cannot cheer up he takes it out on some old book, or better its writer, some old master, by proving the man had a sinister strain in his blood or was addicted to the use of a stomach pump while he wrote. As if every child of nine did not know that great writing is never done by robust men but by gentle creatures going into a decline.

How in this welter of books and criticism does the gentle reader get served? He is warned away from the poisoned books of the past—they are dying of psycollinsis. He is urged enthusiastically on every hand to read "the book of the year" whose name is Legion; and he finds himself sadly led astray. Is there no true muezzin in all this crying of "Allah!"

What this gentle reader asks of a critic is that he be a dependable guide: a forthright man who will say whether a book is all good or all bad, or more good than bad or vice versa. And this gentle reader does not care if the writer's father had a cloven foot or his mother a harelip.

IRVING FINEMAN

Urbana, Illinois.

A Child's Version

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
Sir:

My daughter, who is in the first grade at school, informs me that Mr. Franklin K. Mathiews, chief Scout librarian and associate editor of *Boys' Life,* is decidedly in error when he states in a "Points of View" letter in your issue of Nov. 21 that: "In learning to read . . . the child begins with letters, which are put together into words, then into sentences."

My daughter says that out here in Indiana, at least, that is exactly the reverse of the way children are taught to read. She says they begin by learning what whole sentences—short ones—say. Once sentences are mastered, she says, they are broken up into phrases, then into words, and eventually the words are broken up into the letters. She has been in school only two months and hasn't got that far yet, however. But she can read the first fifty pages of Winston's primer.

The little girl's mother, who used to teach school herself, verifies the child's statements. And the primer, I see, also does so. It includes sixteen stories, beginning with "The Little Red Hen," which starts right off with this: "The little red hen found some wheat. She called the cat. She called the goose. She called the pig. The little red hen said, etc." The fifteenth story is a verse built around the alphabet, and not until the little student has read that far—it is page 107—is any attempt made to learn the individual letters.

"Did you know all the words today?" I asked the little girl one evening when the adventure of school was barely two weeks old.

"All but 'into the wood,'" she replied: "It does look so much like 'said the goose!'"

MAURICE M. FRINK

Elkhart, Ind.

A Reply to Mr. Tripp

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

I wonder of Mr. George H. Tripp has really thought out the point of view he takes in his letter published in your Christmas number? It appears to me that he has not. I do not make a practice of "bursting into print" every time I read something I disagree with; if I did I would be constantly hammering this poor old typewriter. However, Mr. Tripp makes certain statements that seem to me so wrong as to need correction.

He states that the ideal of the Rotary Club is "Service above self," that even if all the members do not put this ideal into practice it is a good one. Certainly the ideal is good; when it is put into practice the business world will quietly or otherwise go into bankruptcy. The first requirement of any business is: PROFIT. When the business man forgets that, he is headed for the ash heap. Of course, the concern that gives the most service should get the most business; but when service reaches the point where it interferes with profit or quality of goods, something unpleasant is due to happen. Personally, I had rather deal with a concern that gives me a dollar's worth of goods for a dollar spent than with a firm that gives me seventy-five cents worth of goods and twenty-five cents worth of something they call service. I like promptness, exactness, and courtesy, but I like my money's worth, too. I will even put up with delays in order to get what I want. No business will run long that puts into practice "service above self;" the business that makes money will be the one that gives you the goods and service.

* *

As for periodical literature being filled up with excuses for Germany and criticism for our former allies, I wonder if Mr. Tripp still thinks that Germany was wholly to blame for the late war? Does he believe that England, France, and Italy never make mistakes? Does he think that Germany is always wrong? Germany may have been mainly to blame for the war, but the other countries helped things along considerably. Countries must be judged by what they do, not by whether or not they are allies of ours.

As for 100% Americanism, may I ask just one question? Which is the greater patriot: The one who says, "My country, may she always be right, but right or wrong my country;" or the one who says, "My country, may she always be right, but when I think she is wrong, I'll tell her and help her to get right?"

I am glad that Mr. Tripp does not threaten to cancel his subscription. Many readers seem to take the attitude that if you disagree with a magazine you should immediately stop reading it. What are magazines and books for if not to stimulate your mind? I disagree with *The Saturday Review* and the *American Mercury* frequently, and I shall continue to take and read them both just as long as they entertain me and stimulate me. When I disagree with what a writer says it causes me to look up the subject and study it a bit; it causes me to study out the reasons why I hold the point of view I do hold. I have even been known to change my opinions upon occasion, terrible as this confession may sound.

In conclusion may I state that I very sincerely hope that Mr. Tripp writes again and that I quite honestly enjoyed his letter, in spite of—or because of—the fact that I personally believe a lot of his statements to be "Banana Oil!" I most heartily enjoy being surprised, disagreed with, and, even, shocked!

GARY EARL HEATH

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The World of Rare Books

By FREDERICK [illegible] HOPKINS

THE COLLECTOR'S IMPORTANCE

RANDOLPH G. ADAMS in "The Whys and the Wherefores of the William L. Clements Library," very effectively illustrates the importance of the book collector. He says:

"If a book had been read by thousands of people, and published in dozens of different editions, it would be hard to deny that it had some influence. Its influence on the course of human progress is one of the things that makes it an important book. But it is just those books which are often the rarest, which bring the highest prices, and which are the most eagerly sought after by the collector. One illustration will suffice here. On our shelves there is a small volume in broken binding, and not in the fresh condition the collector most desires, but carefully preserved in a morocco slip case. It is entitled, 'The Day of Doom' and was written by the Rev. Michael Wigglesworth, and published at Boston in 1715. It is a little bit of New England religious poetry, but it has moulded the thought of America as positively and as effectively as almost any book of its day. Of this 'blazing and sulphurous' volume Moses Coit Tyler has said, 'This great poem, which with entire unconsciousness, attributes to the Divine Being a character the most execrable. . . . to be met with, perhaps in literature, Christian or Pagan, had for a hundred years a popularity far exceeding any other work, in prose or verse, produced in America before the Revolution. But we have no copy of the first edition—nor of the second, nor the third, nor the fourth, nor the fifth. Where are they all? They were so popular that they were read to pieces. One of our copies is the sixth edition. Some years ago Mr. Clements came across a copy of the seventh edition, its binding in tatters, but he paid a large sum for it and entrusted it to the English binder Reviere that it might be reverently covered with a new morocco binding as sumptuous as the importance of such a book demanded. If you would understand the "Puritan conscience" which has so powerfully molded American thought these three hundred years, you must go to this little book."

NEWS AND COMMENT

THEODORE A. ZUNDER, a graduate student at Yale University, is preparing a biography of the American poet and statesman, Joel Barlow (1754-1812), and would be extremely grateful if any individual or institution owning papers of or relating to Barlow would communicate with him. All communications should be addressed to Theodore A. Zunder, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

The only Jane Austen manuscript believed to be in existence, consisting of the final two chapters of the first draft of "Persuasion," has been acquired by the British Museum. The manuscript reveals that the author wrote neatly but rapidly, and made many corrections. She used sheets of note size paper. It is understood that an edition of these two chapters, wherein everything decipherable will be recorded, will be published. The manuscript of the last chapter is practically the same as the definitive printed version.

The Authors Clubs has selected Jo Davidson as the sculptor of the Walt Whitman Memorial which it plans to erect in this city. The selection was made on the basis of Mr. Davidson's preliminary model which represents the poet in great overcoat and hat in hand striding in the open. When completed the statue will be in bronze and of heroic size, probably ten or more feet in height, and it is estimated that it will cost $60,000. George S. Hellman, chairman of the sculpture committee, said the funds were being sought by public subscription.

RARITIES BRING GOOD PRICES.

A VERY important sale was held at the Anderson Galleries December 8 when 367 lots brought the handsome total of $52,563. This two session sale comprised selections from several well known collections, including a New York collection of first editions, original letters, and relics of Lord Byron; first editions and original manuscripts of Charles Dickens from the collection of Newbury Frost Read of this city; original drawings for Dickens with inscriptions in his handwriting; rare first editions of Tennyson; original drawings of Beardsley from three collections; books in beautiful bindings, the property of a famous New York collector, and early printed books, the property of the bankrupt estate of John J. Phelan.

There was a strong interest in all of these rarities and competition was keen and many items brought high prices. The highest price, $3,900, was paid for the original manuscript which Dickens presented to his collaborator, Wilkie Collins, of "The Perils of Certain English Prisoners and their Treasures in Women, Children, Silver, and Jewels." Chapters I and III are in the handwriting of Charles Dickens and Chapter II in that of Wilkie Collins. The Dickens portion, 51 leaves, 8vo, is inlaid to quarto, as is the 39 page manuscript of Wilkie Collins, the whole forming 90 pages with the title and table of contents.

Other representative lots and the prices realized were the following:

Byron (Lord). "Hours of Idleness," 8vo, boards, in case, Newark, 1807. Rare first edition. $270.

Byron. "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," 12mo, half morocco, London, 1809. First edition. $155.

Byron. "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," 8vo, morocco, London, 1809. Second edition with author's presentation inscription. $270.

Byron. "Poems," 8vo, half morocco, London, 1816. Rare first issue of the first edition. $130.

Byron. "Don Juan," Cantos I—XVI. 6 vols., 4to and 8vo, half morocco, London, 1819-24. First edition of all the volumes. $190.

Byron. "Roman History," apparently a Scotch edition, lacking the title page and a few pages at front and back, 12mo, calf, n. p., n. d. From Lord Byron's library. $750.

Byron. Manuscript of "Adieu to the Muse," a poem of ten stanzas, four lines each, written on 4 p. 4to, enclosed in a case. $200.

Gray (Thomas). "Poems," royal 8vo, black morocco, Parma, 1793. Author's presentation copy to Thomas Moore. $31.

Shelley (Mary W.). "Frankenstein," 3 vols., 12 mo, boards, in slip case. London, 1818. First edition with letter of Mrs. Shelley inserted. $260.

Presidents. Autographs of the presidents, Washington to Wilson inclusive, signatures only, mounted and bound in one volume, 4to, by Zaehnsdorf. $190.

Chronicles of America Series. Edited by Allen Johnson, 50 vols., 12mo, cloth, New Haven, 1919. Abraham Lincoln edition. $146.

Longfellow (H. W.). "Evangeline," 12mo, levant morocco, Boston, 1847. First edition. $955.

Strickland (Agnes). "Lives of the Queens of England," 16 vols., 8vo, levant morocco, Philadelphia, n. d. Japan vellum edition. $250.

Heywood (Thomas). "The Rape of Lucrece," small 4to, levant, London, 1638. The John Philip Kemble copy. $125.

Shakespeare. "The Merchant of Venice," small 4to, levant, London, 1600. Second quarto. $400.

Shakespeare. "The first part of the true and honorable history of the Life of Sir John Old-castle," etc., small 4to, morocco, London, 1600. Second edition. This is one of the spurious plays added to the Folio of 1664. $880.

Shakespeare. "Henry VI," Parts II and III. Small 4to, levant, London, n. d. First edition of these parts. $800.

Dickens (Charles). "Pickwick Papers," 20 parts in 19, original green wrappers, 8vo, enclosed in a case, London, 1836-37. First edition in the original parts. $475.

Dickens. "Oliver Twist," 3 vols., small 8vo, morocco, London, 1838. Second issue of the first edition, presentation copy from the author. $975.

Dickens. "A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree," 12mo, inlaid to 8vo, levant, London, 1860. The excessively rare first issue, inlaid, and bound in are ten pages of the original manuscript in the author's handwriting. $1,750.

Dickens. A collection of 21 unpublished original drawings of characters in Dickens's "Works," mounted and bound. $500.

Dickens. Original wash drawing by Hablot K. Browne for "Pickwick Papers," "Mr. Winkle's situation when the door blew to," 8½ by 6 inches. With marginal inscription in Dickens's handwriting. $2,250.

Shakespeare is almost as bad as Ibsen and it takes a morbid or primitive nature to enjoy a play of that kind.

—*Eugene, (Ore.) Daily Guard*

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The Phoenix Nest

THE Centaur Press has certainly made a most attractive volume of *D. H. Lawrence's* "Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine." * * * The cover looks like a combination of a painter's palette and a dish of scrambled eggs, bizarre but engaging. * * * In "The Crown," a long philosophical essay, there is some gorgeous writing, such as this, which seems to us somewhat pertinent to this column:

> The tiger blazed transcendant into immortal darkness. The unique phoenix of the desert grew up to maturity and wisdom. Sitting upon her tree, she was the only one of her kind in all creation, supreme, the zenith, the perfect aristocrat. She attained to perfection, eagle-like she rose in her nest and lifted her wings, surpassing the zenith of mortality; so she was translated into the flame of eternity, so she became one with the fiery Origin.
>
> It was not for her to sit tight, and assert her own tight ego. She was gone as she came.

* * * That has made our whole day a little brighter. Laugh that off, if you can! * * * In a tight red box from which it is difficult to remove them, come three volumes put forth by Brentano's, "The Lives of the Rakes." The books are written by *E. Beresford Chancellor*. They are heavy in weight and stiff in the pages. We don't think much of the format. The first volume is, of course, devoted to the Merry Monarch and his favorites, the second to such Restoration personages as Buckingham, Rochester, Etheredge, Sedley, Dorset, etc. The third book treats of Colonel Charteris and the Duke of Wharton. * * * There are three more volumes in this series that do not appear here. One (Vol. IV) treats of the Hell-Fire Club, Sandwich, Dashwood, Wilkes, Churchill, etc.,—another depicts "Old Q" and Barrymore. A third expatiates upon the Regency rakes. * * * Certainly the nadir of all these lives is reached in the life of Francis Charteris, in whose existence it is difficult to find a single redeeming trait. He was a monster of meanness and a hectoring bully rotten to the core. Beside him such a rake as Sir Charles Sedley shines like an angel. * * * A new life of "Wellington," by the King's Librarian, *Hon. John Fortescue*, presents in a lively and human manner the victor of Waterloo. It is brought out by Dodd, Mead. The paper and printing are a pleasure after those of "The Lives of the Rakes." * * * *Oliver M. Sayler's* "Inside the Moscow Art Theatre" gives an intimate picture of this, the world's foremost acting company. The many illustrations enhance the work. The costume sketches are particularly interesting. * * * The Kasidah, translated by *Sir Richard Burton*, has now been illustrated in a new edition by *John Kettelwell*, but the style of this artist seems to us but mediocre. * * * *Nellie Barne's* selection of American Indian Love Lyrics, from the songs of the North American Indians, bears a foreword by *Mary Austin*, who points out that we in the United States are privileged, in these songs, to watch the evolution of poetic form from stages somewhat earlier than those recorded by Aristotle. * * * Look in February for *William Beebe's* account of his most recent expedition in "The Arcturus Adventure" (Putnam). A few weeks ago we spoke to Mr. Beebe of *Edmund Wilson's* article in the *Atlantic* which purported to be a conversation held between Mr. Beebe and a Marine Iguana. Mr. Beebe had read it and been much amused. He also pronounced Mr. Wilson's scientific elucidation quite correct. * * * "Spanish Bayonet" is a new novel by *Stephen Vincent Benét* which will appear in book form this next Spring or early Summer. * * * *Cyril Hume's* new novel, "The Golden Dancer" may appear earlier. We do not like Mr. Hume's title as well as we do the title of *Mr. Cabell's* latest, "The Silver Stallion," but we usually like the precious metals in book-nomenclature nevertheless. * * * The Stratford Company suggests *Dr. William E. B. Dubois's* "The Gift of Black Folk" as a Christmas gift, but it can't be as good as *Alaine Locke's* "The New Negro" (A. & C. Boni), the illustrations to which alone fascinated us. * * * And some of the Louisianan negro songs in this new negro songbook, "Mellows," are—as *H. C. Witwer* might have Miss Gladys Murgatroyd say, "Honest to Allah, the dinosaur's earmuffs!" * * * It's rather amusing to see *E. Barrington* reviving that ancient charmer, Perdita Robinson, for a *Cosmopolitan* audience, but it gives *Dean Cornwell* a chance at "costume stuff" and enables us more easily to distinguish his work from that of *Walt Louderback*, who is hewing out the illustrations to *Charles G. Norris's* "Pig Iron" in the same magazine. * * * "The Panchatantra" is the big seller on the list of The Chicago University Press. It is advertised as "a collection that rivals the 'Arabian Nights' ", and folk far and near are discovering this world classic for the first time. * * * The title means literally "five books", in Sanskrit, and *Mr. Ryder's* brilliant translation has both satisfied scholars and opened for the average reader a new mine of beauty. A smaller volume, "Gold's Gloom," contains a number of representative tales in a particularly attractive binding. But the larger volume is the one to buy. * * * It is one of the world's best collections of tales, first gathered together, fifteen hundred years ago in the Vale of Kashmir. Mr. Ryder worked from a text written about 1199 A. D. It's worth your four dollars. * * * The Lantern Press, out in San Francisco, is attempting to bring about a renaissance of fine book making in that city by the Golden Gate, such as was done in the days of the Lark, when *Burgess, Garnett, Porter* and others were the luminaries. * * * They have just had "The Modern Writer" by *Sherwood Anderson* and "The Awakening" by *Stella Benson* printed by Edwin and Robert Grabhorn, and made beautiful books of them. * * * We thank *A. C. Hart* of Brooklyn for his letter. He thinks our knocking of the city desk in regard to newspaper poetry is barking up the wrong tree. "Does the City Room Caliph," he questions, "select the 'fillers' that go into newspaper columns? Or some other guy?" * * * Probably some other guy. * * * He sends us a poem by *Clinton Scollard* that appeared in the *Sun*, "The Birches." It *is* certainly better than the run of newspaper verse. * * * To *H. L. Mencken* *Walt MacDougall* dedicates his "This is the Life!", one of Knopf's January publications. He says that *Mencken* is really responsible for the book and that it is the "record of a blameless life." He detects in Mencken his own tendency to seek for perfection in men and women, "to believe labels are genuine and to try to fill inside straights." * * * Walt MacDougall has "pottered up and down a bit and had a rattling day" as a cartoonist. His reminiscences are certainly interesting. * * * We happen to know a young lady who has written an extremely good first novel. It will probably burst from the press by early summer if not sooner. We had the privilege of hearing some of the manuscript the other evening. The book has a vivacity and brilliance of color that ought to delight the judicious,—that is if (as we surmise) the judicious are not nearly as stodgy as they used to be. * * * The book we refer to is entitled "Roundabout" and is by *Nancy Hoyt*. One might call it a carrousel at the human carnival. It is gay and satiric and romantic and kaleidoscopic. * * * Before we close we wish to register a decided liking for the *Molnar* whatever-you-call-it, "The Glass Slipper." It hasn't had a very good reception, but we enjoyed it quite a lot. Perhaps, in this play full of good things, Molnar doesn't know exactly where he is going,—but, anyhow, he is on his way. Of course we fell hard again for *June Walker*, even though sometimes we forgot and expected the jazz band from "Processional" to march on the scene. * * * And one of the most vivid intellectual experiences in New York just now is *Clare Eames* as Lavinia in "Androcles and the Lion." * * * And the most exciting experience obtainable anywhere at any price in New York is "The Big Parade," a film in which *Mr. Vidor* has demonstrated a genius which the older arts may envy. * * * *Selah!*

THE PHOENICIAN

George Currie, the sprightly literary critic of the *Brooklyn Eagle*, is congratulating himself that the *Eagle* "is not numbered among those who have been held up to the hoi polloi for ribald laughter," in Mr. Mencken's "Americana." But we warn George that if he keeps on referring to "the" hoi polloi and "nouveau jeunesse" he is in great danger of being reproached by ourselves.

—Kuno Freischutz, *Hoboken Abendblatt*.

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